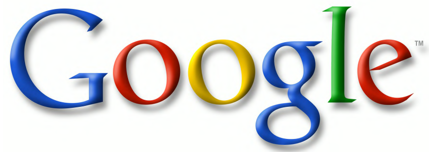

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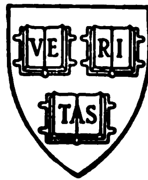

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FAMOUS ACTRESSES OF THE DAY

IN AMERICA

Maude Adams
(as Lady Babbie)

Famous Actresses of the Day in America

By

Lewis C. Strang

ILLUSTRATED

Boston
L. C. Page and Company
(Incorporated)
1899

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PREFACE.

It is obviously impossible, in writing of persons so prominently before the public as the women considered in this book, to secure any great amount of new matter regarding the chief incidents of their lives, and the author wishes frankly to acknowledge himself a compiler and editor in so far as biographical details are concerned. The facts were gathered from various contemporaneous publications, and in some instances, from the actresses themselves. Accuracy has been the aim, but sometimes it has appeared, after a careful sifting of ambiguous and contradictory statements, that a well-considered guess was the only apparent solution of the problem, In so far as criticism is concerned the

opinions expressed, except where credit is given, are the author's own, and he has endeavoured to be just with kindness, and still to preserve a proper sense of proportion. In preparing the list of the actrésses it was necessary to exclude from it many worthy of notice. A numerical limit had to be fixed, and in the process of selection the preference was given to those whose work during last season was especially notable. The arrangement of the book is purely mechanical, and comparisons, which are usually foolish, and always valueless, are purposely avoided.

L. C. S.

FAMOUS ACTRESSES OF THE DAY

IN AMERICA.

CHAPTER I.

MAUDE ADAMS.

IN figure almost painfully slight and girlish; her face elfishly bewitching in its very plainness; her eyes large, blue, and roguish; her hair ashen brown and delicately rippling; unusually gifted intellectually, and with a personality of the most persuasive magnetism, Maude Adams is to-day the most popular woman on the American stage. Her success is generally considered due to rare good fortune, but it is hardly fair thus to ignore the years of hard work that have gone

to perfect an art so subtle that one hardly knows whether or not it exists at all. She is naturally a comédienne of exquisitely delicate and refined methods. Her powers of suggestion are remarkable, and for that reason her acting is exceedingly difficult to analyse. One unfamiliar with the theatre, and with the art of acting, would say that her work is largely intuitive, but intuition and magnetism will hardly explain Miss Adams's invariable success in the many different characters that she has assumed. Her Juliet — severely criticised though it was — showed, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that there was within that little frame the big, sensitive soul of an artist, a soul capable of understanding the great emotions and passions, and of expressing them, not with tragic power, but with a wealth of pathos far more heartrending.

Miss Adams is said to be connected with the family of John Quincy Adams, the fifth President of the United States. Joshua

Adams, a cousin of John Quincy Adams, left the family homestead in Quincy, Massachusetts, and moved to Canada. His oldest son, also Joshua Adams, immigrated to Utah with a party of Mormon missionaries. This second Joshua Adams had a daughter, Annie Adams, and she was Maude's mother. Maude Adams was born in November, 1872, in Salt Lake City, where her father, whose name was Kiskadden, was in business, and her mother was a member of a local stock company.

Maude's first appearance on any stage was at the age of nine months in Salt Lake City, in a play called "The Lost Child." The business of the play required that a baby should be brought on the stage in a platter. The baby that had expected to be cradled in the dish had an attack of stage fright, or something equally serious, just as she should have been behaving her prettiest in preparation for her public appearance. She yelled and kicked and refused to be pacified. Little

Miss Maude, who was spending the evening in her mother's dressing-room, was seized upon by the frantic stage-manager and rushed before the footlights, winking and blinking and crowing with delight at the applause of the audience. Naturally enough, Miss Adams does not remember her début, and her first recollection of stage life is the playing of Little Schneider in "Our Fritz" with J. K. Emmett.

"I can see," she once said, "a little child in satin knickerbockers and jacket, with a big collar and tie, holding a jumping-jack in her hand, and trying to step out a dance with Fritz. That was myself. But it seems as though it must have been some other being. It gives me such a peculiar sensation in thinking about it. In that play I was put upon a large wheel, which was set revolving. At a certain point I had to scream, but I was never quite sure when that time was. I used to look at the manager's wife, who

was standing near the wing, and whisper to her, 'Aunt Gerty, is it time to scream?' I enjoyed playing with Emmett, he was so lovely, and he was so nice to the little children."

Miss Adams's father died when she was young, and her girlhood was passed in San Francisco, where she went to school until she was fifteen years of age. Then she joined her mother as a member of the Alcazar Theatre Company in San Francisco.

"I couldn't have had a better school," she said, in speaking of this experience. "The bill was changed every week, all the standard things were played, and I had an opportunity to hear all of them, even when I did not appear. I have realised the value of this early work during all my later experience."

Miss Adams first came under Charles Frohman's management when she joined E. H. Sothern's company, during Mr. Sothern's first tour as a star. After leaving him

she created the character of Nellie, the lame girl, in "A Lost Paradise," and then the part of the minister's sister, Dot Bradbury, in Charles Hoyt's "A Midnight Bell." It was not until she became John Drew's leading lady, however, that she began to attract any great attention, and her first notable success was Suzanne in "The Masked Ball." Her tipsy scene will be remembered as a particularly dainty bit of acting, deliciously funny but never vulgar. While with Mr. Drew Miss Adams also appeared in Henry Guy Carleton's "Butterflies," Madeline Lucette Riley's "Christopher, Jr.," Henry Arthur Jones's "A Bauble Shop," and in "Rosemary."

The young actress is most widely known as Lady Babbie in J. M. Barrie's "The Little Minister." Miss Adams played the character, which was her first starring rôle, a whole season in New York, and last season she was equally successful in the other large cities of

the country. The play itself, though introducing the personages and main incidents of "The Little Minister," might fairly be termed an original work rather than a dramatisation, so skilfully did the author of the novel rearrange his story for the stage. The drama was simple, straightforward and affecting, clean and wholesome, with an atmosphere delightfully artistic. Babbie, "the Egyptian," was a whimsical character, made indescribably fascinating by Miss Adams's glowing personality and gentle, though keenly incisive and authoritative, acting. She was dashing, careless, and free as the tantalising gypsy girl; as the daughter of Lord Rintoul, graceful and spirited, serious and sympathetic. In pathetic moments her touch was sure and her sincerity convincing; in moments of light-hearted gaiety her blithesomeness was contagious and her humour a well-spring of joy.

Miss Adams has just had the unique

experience of risking a seemingly inevitable failure and winning a most remarkable success. It must be acknowledged that it was a shocking thought,—Lady Babbie as Juliet,—but no more shocking than the performance itself proved to many theatre-goers, notably William Winter, whose denunciation in the New York *Tribune* of May 9, 1899, the morning after Miss Adams's first appearance as Juliet, may become a classic. Mr. Winter wrote:

"Miss Adams, a delicate, seemingly fragile and febrile person, in the potion scene of Juliet, might be expected to supply a mild specimen of hysterics. That was feasible, and that was afforded. The individual charm of girl-like sincerity which is peculiar to Miss Adams swayed her performance of Juliet with a winning softness, eliciting sympathy and inspiring kindness. Beyond that there was nothing. Many schoolgirls, with a little practice, would play the part just as

well — and would be just as little like it. In her especial way Miss Adams is a most agreeable actress; she ought to be neither surprised nor hurt to ascertain by this experience that nature never intended her to act the tragic heroines of Shakespeare. Much of the part was whispered and much of it was bleated. The personality cannot readily be described, but perhaps it may not be unfairly indicated as that of an intellectual young lady from Boston, competent in the mathematics and intent on teaching pedagogy. A balcony scene without passion, a parting scene without delirium of grief, and a potion scene without power, — those were the products of Miss Adams's dramatic art."

To offset Mr. Winter I quote Edward A. Dithmar, of the New York *Times*, a man sane, conservative, and experienced:

"As she sat on the rude chair in the friar's dimly lighted cell, looking up into the old man's face, eagerly, beseechingly, and then

half turning, with an upward gesture, toward the window, spoke so earnestly in a tone far removed, to be sure, from the formal utterance of classical tragedy, but with unmistakable feeling and sincerity, those thrilling phrases upon which the hopes of many an aspiring Juliet of the stage have broken:

> "'O! bid me leap, rather than marry Paris,
> From off the battlements of yonder tower;
> Or walk in thievish way; or bid me lurk
> Where serpents are—'

the triumph of the newest of Juliets was assured. Far removed from the formal utterance of classical tragedy, indeed, but there was more of natural eloquence and seeming spontaneity of expression in Miss Adams's delivery of those words than has been associated with the manner of classical drama on our stage since Sarah Bernhardt acted Phédre. It can safely be proclaimed that Maude Adams is not a tragic actress. But Henry Irving is not a tragedian, and so

far as the English-speaking stage is concerned, the manner of tragedy all but died with Edwin Booth. . . .

"Juliet seemed actually to live again, loving suddenly and for aye, sorrowing and dying. Last winter the critics of music frequently and justly found fault with the singing of Ernest Van Dyck; but they all declared that his splendid histrionism triumphed in 'Lohengrin' and 'Tannhaüser,' in spite of his deficiencies of voice and vocal method. Similarly we may say of Maude Adams (though I should hesitate to use quite such a showy word as 'splendid' to distinguish her dramatic talent) that her acting suffices in 'Romeo and Juliet,' though she does not sing the music as it might be sung. She has both tact and a rare quality of personal charm to bear her out. She has good sense, artistic sympathy, and appreciation. And as occasion requires its use, she produces an appropriate symbol."

There is no mystery in the opposition of these critics. Mr. Winter, grounded in Shakespearian tradition and not so impressionable, perhaps, as a younger man, lacking in the sympathy that is touched by sincerity and genuine humanity, saw only the faults — the glaring faults, if you will — of Miss Adams's technique. Mr. Dithmar, on the other hand, thrust aside exasperating deficiencies and crudities and startling violations of classic rule and order; he reached the gist of the whole matter, — the inspired realness of this Juliet.

There is only one Juliet that should be sought for by all actresses who try to win fame in this most difficult of rôles. The traditional Juliet is the survival of the fittest, the result of the united intelligence of the most gifted players; and consequently the traditional Juliet is the only Juliet that can be considered as a permanent conception. Nevertheless, there is the stubborn fact that Miss

Adams gave a wonderfully touching performance of the character. Her convincing sincerity, her intelligent reading of the lines, — not metrical reading, mind you, for that she ignored entirely, — and, more than all, the appealing humanity of her impersonation, were forceful in the extreme; and a fondness for tradition should not keep one from recognising these great merits in Miss Adams's work. Tradition is a standard of judgment, and in most cases a proper standard of judgment; but once in awhile tradition has to be thrown out of the window, and it seems eminently proper so to treat it in Miss Adams's case.

Maude Adams's Juliet was the creation of an actress whose personality and magnetism enabled her to override seemingly insurmountable obstacles in the way of physique and temperament; whose sheer mental force made not only possible, but pathetically real, a Juliet that defied tradition; whose inherent

dramatic power made acceptable a reading of the lines that ignored even the pretence of metre, and also logically established a conception that was never for a moment tragic, a conception that showed only a girl, frightened almost at her great love, and later suffering she scarcely knew why.

One might multiply words in recounting the faults in the performance as judged by the standard readings of the part. She did not look Juliet in the first place; she spoke the lines without the least striving after elocutionary effect, spoke them as if they were the simplest of every-day prose; she never once thrilled one with the full realisation of a supreme, mighty passion. She did do one thing, however, and for that one thing I am willing to sacrifice all ideals of personal appearance, all delight in the music of the verse, willing to sacrifice even tragic power itself. She made Juliet live! Moreover, if she did not speak poetry, she cer-

tainly found in the poetry new and beautiful meanings; and though she did not act tragedy, she accomplished far more when she touched the heart with a sorrow most genuine.

Miss Adams was at her best in the first scene with Romeo, in the balcony scene, and in the scene in Friar Laurence's cell, after she had received her father's command to marry Paris. The first love scene with Romeo was of beauty simply indescribable. Remember, this was a Juliet who was really a girl, whose youth and innocence added immeasurably to the effect of her meeting with Romeo. One saw the dawning of love, realised the perplexity and bewilderment that accompanied love's conception and understood the wealth of knowledge that came with the kiss that so often has seemed mere wantonness on the part of Romeo.

The power of the balcony scene came largely from the unusual and vivid interpretation of the lines. They were read with a

perfect comprehension, and with an intensity and earnestness that brooked no limitations of metre. The scene in Friar Laurence's cell was played without a suggestion of the horror that is sometimes given it to the detriment of the potion scene. The childishness displayed in the scene with the nurse was pronounced, and the potion scene was a penetrating picture of a horror-stricken girl, driven to the verge of despair, suffering pitifully and alone. The death scene, unnecessarily mutilated in the version used by Miss Adams, was quiet in the extreme and of abiding pathos.

CHAPTER II.

JULIA MARLOWE.

JULIA MARLOWE, whose real name is Sarah Frances Frost, was born, late in the sixties, in Caldbeck, a north of England village. She was brought to the United States by her parents when she was about five years old. The family first settled in Kansas, but later moved to Cincinnati. Fanny Brough was the name by which Miss Marlowe was known, when, at the age of twelve years, her stage experiences began in the chorus of Colonel Miles's Juvenile Pinafore Company. She was too bright, long to remain with the crowd, however, and soon she was permitted to take such parts as Hebe and Little Buttercup.

In charge of the troupe was Ada Dow, sister-in-law of Manager Miles, and years ago a well-known actress. She became convinced that the girl had talent, and virtually adopted her with the intention of training her for higher work on the stage. When she was fifteen years old, Miss Marlowe, still known as Fanny Brough, toured New York State with Robert McWade in "Rip Van Winkle," playing at first the boy Hendrix, and later the small part of Rip's sister. The McWade company met with hard luck, and finally came to grief at Lyons, N. Y. An actor, who was with McWade, has reported that Fanny Brough was not altogether a favourite with her companions. She was pert and saucy, and not much of an actress either, a curious comment when one considers the Julia Marlowe of to-day.

At the age of sixteen Miss Marlowe played her first Shakespearian character, Romeo's page, Balthazar. The Juliet of this perform-

ance was Josephine Riley, of whom there may be memories in the West. Three years of hard study at Ada Dow's quiet home in Bayonne followed for the young actress, and it was the genuine old-fashioned stage training that the aspirant for dramatic honours underwent, an experience hard on mind and body, but thorough if one lived through it. There were days and days of practice in gymnastics, in voice culture, in elocution, and in stage deportment. Plays were read and re-read, time and time again. They were worked over with the aid of commentaries, histories, and critical notes, and even the life story of the author was investigated for further enlightenment on knotty points. Not until the play as a whole had been thoroughly mastered was the memorising of a line permitted. As a result of all this drudgery, at the end of the three years the student had a fair repertory of standard dramas, and was ready for her début as a star, which

event took place on April 25, 1887, at New London, Conn. It was at this time that she was first called Julia Marlowe.

"I remember quite well my first appearance in New London. I played Parthenia in 'Ingomar,' and the morning papers spoke of me as a genius, and said that I would surely wear a crown of diamonds before my career was at an end. How I did enjoy that," was the naïve account of her début that Miss Marlowe gave several years after.

A provincial tour of the small cities and towns of Connecticut and Massachusetts followed, the youthful star playing Juliet, Parthenia, Pauline in "The Lady of Lyons," and Julia in "The Hunchback." In October she boldly tried New York, playing Shakespeare at the Bijou Opera House, a theatre chiefly given over to light opera. Her company was poor, and her scenery and costumes were inadequate; but most disastrous of all was the fact that no New Yorker had ever

heard of her. This alone would have settled her fate had everything else been in her favour. Some of the critics recognised talent in her acting; Robert G. Ingersoll wrote a rapturous letter regarding her; Lester Wallack testified to the promise her work gave; but the public refused to have anything to do with her. It was a cruel experience, and one which Miss Marlowe did not soon forget. For years — even after her reputation had climbed into the metropolis — she shunned New York as she would a pestilence.

Back to the provinces went the young actress to pass through a weary year of one night stands before she tried another large city. This time it was Boston. The date was December 3, 1888; the place was the Hollis Street Theatre, and the play was "Ingomar." Miss Marlowe's success was complete, so complete, in fact, that she was engaged for a return date at the Park Theatre the

following spring. The repertory of the December week included, besides "Ingomar," "The Hunchback," "The Lady of Lyons," "Twelfth Night," and "Romeo and Juliet." For the following spring engagement she added "As You Like It" to the list. The following year she first played "Pygmalion and Galatea."

In 1891 Miss Marlowe tried Beatrice in "Much Ado about Nothing." She was hardly equal to this brilliant character at first, but her authority increased with every performance until her conception at last became adequate. Her impersonation of the character, while vivacious and altogether charming, never seemed to reach the soul of this most sparkling and intellectual of Shakespearian women. Her Imogene in "Cymbeline," acted about the same time, was a more successful characterisation, abounding in sentiment and beautifully pathetic, though by no means tragically great. Constance in

"The Love Chase" came a year later, followed with Letitia Hardy in "The Belle's Stratagem" and two boys' parts, Charles Hart in "Rogues and Vagabonds" and "Chatterton." In 1894, Miss Marlowe attempted Lady Teazle in "School for Scandal" and "Colombe's Birthday," neither of which was a lasting success. In May of that year she was married to Robert Tabor.

The season of 1895–96 saw Miss Marlowe as Kate Hardcastle in "She Stoops to Conquer," and later in the elaborate and unfortunate revival of "King Henry IV.," in which the actress essayed the rôle of Prince Hal, a thoroughly virile character, entirely beyond the range of a woman. She is also remembered for her impersonation of Lydia Languish in the star cast of "The Rivals," which was headed by Joseph Jefferson. Miss Marlowe's latest productions have shown a constantly increasing tendency to avoid the classic. They are "For Bonnie

Prince Charlie," "Romola," "The Countess Valeska," and "Colinette."

Physically, Julia Marlowe is a brunette of the brown-haired, dark-eyed type. Just what colour her eyes are I really do not know,—for a guess, dark brown, shading into black. They are large, of abiding charm, and wondrously expressive. She is rather above medium stature, though in certain rôles she seems strangely undersized. The loveliness of her face is of expression rather than of mere feature, and it is emphatically a woman's face. On the stage she has unusual magnetism and especially winning femininity. This latter quality pervades all her characters, making them so delicately alluring and so peculiarly lovable that the judgment, even of an experienced observer, is very often led astray into unmerited enthusiasm. Always satisfying to a degree, and particularly delightful as a comédienne, she has never shown any unfathomable depth of tempera-

ment, nor has she yet achieved the really tragic.

Her most popular Shakespearian character is probably Rosalind, an impersonation that is full of life and exuberance of spirits and of by-play entrancingly suggestive of masquerading femininity. The lines she speaks with naturalness, and the music of her voice adds immeasurably to the beauty of the poetry. If there be any fault in her work, it is the extremely subtle one of failing to make Rosalind womanly as well as feminine.

Miss Marlowe's Viola in "Twelfth Night" is a very fine study, indeed, one of the most nearly perfect impersonations in her Shakespearian repertory. Viola is an essentially pathetic character over which continually hangs the sorrow of a hopeless love. Aside from a too evident burlesque of the duel scene with Sir Andrew Aguecheek, Miss Marlowe's conception is continuously tender and maidenly, breathing the essence of

poetry and pregnant with a refined humour that is akin to tears.

Her Juliet is wonderfully beautiful, — wonderfully pathetic even, especially in the potion scene, — but it is a characterisation that has always been found wanting in one essential.

"Her nature is sympathetic with poetic sentiment and with humour in its purity," wrote Elwyn A. Barron. "That which is sweetly ideal, gentle, touching, that which is light in mirth and prettily fanciful, has never, we believe, had a more delightful exponent than Miss Marlowe. She is exquisite, too, in pathos and effective in stronger emotions, but in the dignity of soul-mastering passion she is deficient."

When a dramatic critic can find no other fault with an actress's Juliet, he invariably declares that she lacks passion; and it is true that Miss Marlowe has failed to convey the idea of an overpowering love that is

the great element in Juliet's nature. Juliet's passion is far away from animal desire of the Carmen type. It is the poet's perfect love, the unattainable and undefinable ideal of devotion and purity held by human kind. Can such an idealistic conception be expressed by means of the art of acting? Undoubtedly it has been so expressed, not often, perhaps, but once is sufficient to prove that it is not impossible. Miss Marlowe herself once said: "A full realisation of my ideal is still beyond my strength. When once it is wholly and permanently within my grasp, I shall then indeed deserve to be called a great artist."

Miss Marlowe has not the rich old comedy style, as was plainly shown in her playing of Kate Hardcastle. It was in many respects a charming stage presence, but it was not an honest exhibition of acting. It was the actress's personality only that was ever in evidence. Miss Marlowe played with the

brilliancy of a virtuoso, and her Kate was very provoking and very captivating. But it was also artificial and affected. There was none of that innocent artlessness and little of that girlish recklessness to which is due Kate's imposition on Marlow. Her Kate was much too old, much too sober, and much too wise.

Miss Marlowe demonstrated her expertness in light comedy in "Colinette," a "make-believe" sort of a play — almost a burlesque on life — which she carried to success by her own sweetly attractive individuality. Her acting, however, added nothing to a reputation won by the hardest kind of work in the face of many difficulties, the reputation of being the most authoritative Shakespearian actress that we have.

CHAPTER III.

SARAH COWELL LEMOYNE.

SARAH COWELL LEMOYNE is identified in the public mind with the rôle of the Dowager Duchess de Coutras in Henri Lavedan's comedy, "Catherine," and those that saw the play in this country will not soon forget the womanly sympathy and the matronly tenderness with which she invested that very interesting character. If ever an actress lived a part, Mrs. LeMoyne lived the Duchess, and the fineness of her art, the sincerity of her sentiment, and the completeness of her conception left absolutely no loop-hole through which could enter false touches and broken illusions.

"Mrs. Sarah Cowell LeMoyne's assump-

tion of the Dowager Duchess de Coutras," wrote Henry Austin Clapp, "it is not absurd to say, in its appeal to the artistic sense, has in recent years seldom been surpassed upon our stage. Its suavity, directness, elegance, and distinction of style are remarkable indeed. Practising, like Miss Annie Russell, a method never violent, seldom even vehement, and, like her, almost never lifting her voice above an ordinary conversational tone, Mrs. LeMoyne, by the power of her pure and unaffected enunciation, of her vitally sympathetic tones, and of her frank and beautiful manners, at once convinces every auditor of the refinement, the genuineness, the breadth, and the loveliness of the Duchess's character. Whenever she moves or speaks, she charms and engages. All her dialogues are quiet, yet all are keenly interesting, and several of them are deeply stirring. Seldom is anything better witnessed here than her scenes in the first

act with the duke, her son, where her shrewdness, her sympathy, and her experience of life are all in evidence as she listens to his confession of love for Catherine, and the intent to make Catherine his wife; the mother's combined playfulness and gravity, the tactfulness of her words and ways, her high-bred grace and magnanimity, are all equally obvious and fine, and under them all an anxious maternal tenderness and yearning are shown with pathetic potency. Here is a piece of comedy acting done with that ideal touch, at once light and firm, easy and strong, which is characteristic of the best histrionic school. Mrs. LeMoyne's triumph with her audience was complete. At the close of every one of her scenes there was a stir of responsive delight and quickened sympathy, which ran through the mass of spectators as waves move over a field of wheat under the impact of a breeze."

Yet Mrs. LeMoyne's stage experience has

embraced perhaps six different characters, and has extended over only three seasons, one in the early eighties, when A. M. Palmer's Union Square Theatre Company was at the height of its artistic excellence, and the others within the last two years. With the Union Square Company Mrs. LeMoyne, who was then simply Sarah Cowell, appeared as the mother in "A Celebrated Case," as a maid in "The Banker's Daughter," as the opera singer in "French Flats," and as an old woman in "The Danicheffs." This part was the first one in which she made any recognisable impression, and it was also the last one that she played for many years. She appeared in it first in Chicago, and when the company returned to New York Manager Palmer insisted that she should act it there. Now, New York was the actress's home, and for more than three hundred nights she had presented there the maid in "The Banker's Daugh-

ter." And now to come back as an old woman! Surely that was too much. She would be the countess or anything else in the play except the old woman. Mr. Palmer was persistent, however, and Miss Cowell's connection with the stage ended right there, not to be renewed until the spring of 1898, when she accepted the rôle of Mrs. Lorimer in "The Moth and the Flame," a character in which she displayed the wonderful finesse that was so finely evident in "Catherine."

"When I was a girl in my teens," said Mrs. LeMoyne, in speaking of her first stage experience, "I was acquainted with Madame Blavatsky. Before she left New York I got to know her very well. She had once told me that I reminded her in appearance of Rachel, and although I knew nothing in the world about Rachel, I set out to read her history and find out all I could about her. When I learned that she was an actress, I was more than ever determined to continue

reciting, as I had been doing for the benefit of my friends, and as a result of that there came the idea of my becoming an actress. I knew nobody connected with the theatre; my family had no associations of that kind, and there seemed to be very little prospect that I would ever accomplish my purpose. But I did ultimately get an introduction to Mr. Palmer, who was then at the Union Square Theatre. I read for him and Mr. Cazuran a scene from 'Henry VIII.' He told me he had nothing for me just at that time. Finally, he asked me if I thought I could act any of the parts in 'A Celebrated Case,' which was then the play at the theatre. I told him I thought I could act Agnes Booth's. She was playing the part of the wife in the prologue. When I mentioned that rôle, Mr. Palmer looked astonished. But he gave it to me to study, and after awhile I had an opportunity to play it several times on the road. That was my first part,

and where I played it I cannot remember; I was in too much of a whirl to pay attention to the names of towns. Afterward I joined the company and played the part of a maid. I was a realist in those days, and I remember that I insisted on wearing slippers without heels, because I thought those the appropriate shoes for a maid to wear. But I was applauded for a scene with John Strebelow, in which I showed sympathy for him in his troubles. In 'The Danicheffs' I was more successful as the old woman than in any other rôle I played during my first engagement. But it was that which led me to bring my theatrical life to an end for so many years."

When Mrs. LeMoyne left Mr. Palmer, she gave up acting for good and began to teach elocution and to give readings. As a reader, she visited England in 1884, and met with much success in drawing-room entertainments in private residences. While there, she be-

came acquainted, among other literary men, with the poet, Robert Browning, and later she was an important factor in the popularising of his works in this country. Her principal readings from Browning were "Count Gismond," "Time's Revenge," "Meeting at Night," "Hervé Riel," and "Love among the Ruins." She was also very successful with the anonymous poem, so full of dramatic action and pathos, "The Engineer's Story," and also with Mary Mapes Dodge's dialect study, "Miss Maloney, on the Chinese Question." Mrs. LeMoyne had several offers to return to the stage while she was reading and teaching. Once she recited "Kentucky Belle" and "The Old Boat" before Sir Henry Irving, and in the little talk that followed he said that he would give her an engagement in his company the next day, if she cared to return to the stage. Lawrence Barrett also heard her read, and immediately offered her a part in "The Blot

on the 'Scutcheon." These offers were quickly declined, however.

"I think that most of my friends among the actors were uncertain of my abilities to act," said Mrs. LeMoyne. "I remember they were always amiable when I mentioned my desire to become an actress some day. But it was evident that they had very little confidence in the outcome. I was reminded of that when I saw in a box at the theatre, where I was appearing in 'The Moth and the Flame,' an actress who had once come to me for some lessons in diction. She was about to play a new rôle, and I was discussing it with her. Something I said must have touched her sensitive artistic nature, for she said to me, suddenly, 'But, Mrs. LeMoyne, I did not come to you for lessons in acting.' 'Oh, I understand,' I answered, with humility that was possibly exaggerated. 'I couldn't possibly act myself.' I was rather pleased when I saw her in the au-

dience, for the play went particularly well that night.

"Those days of my life were of greater profit than they would have been had I remained an actress," she continued. "I saw all the great actors, and I read all that was good in literature. I believe now that nothing is better for the actor's art than a period of retirement, which gives him the opportunity to study the great ones of his profession and see just how he stands in reference to the other actors. It is as fatal to an actor as it is to anybody else to drop out of the foremost rank. He must always be ahead if he would keep the admiration and respect of the public, and it seems to me that only those that know what is going on about them are able to be up with the foremost."

Mrs. LeMoyne's genius for the delineation of the middle-aged heroine is not exactly paralleled on the English-speaking stage. She understands thoroughly the

woman whose life has been chastened by suffering, and whose sympathy for others has been sharpened by experiences that have taught her to judge the world honestly, intelligently, and lovingly. Her emotional power is exceptional, and in pathetic moments she displays perfect sincerity.

CHAPTER IV.

MINNIE MADDERN FISKE.

MINNIE MADDERN FISKE's life story is unusual enough to be the invention of some fantastic writer of fiction. I was about to call it romantic, but that is about the last word to apply to those early experiences whose chief accompaniments seem to the average person to have been hardship and drudgery. Doubtless there were compensations in an existence that began in the playhouse and continued there almost constantly for twenty-four years; in a babyhood passed with a "fly-by-night" theatrical troupe that toured the South and West in the days when a dining-room in some country roadhouse made a prime theatre; in a childhood spent

MRS. FISKE
As Tess in "Tess of the D'Urbervilles"

Davey, her father being Thomas Davey, a pioneer circuit manager in the South and West; but from the first she was known as Minnie Maddern, after her mother, whose name was Lizzie Maddern, and who was herself an actress of some promise, and a musician of much ability. Mrs. Fiske's grandmother was an English girl of good family, who eloped with her music-teacher, and was, in consequence, cut off even without the proverbial shilling. The young couple, however, managed to exist somehow, and with the usual poor man's luck were blessed with a large family. There were seven children, besides father and mother, when the family immigrated to America, where the father formed a concert company, in which each of the youngsters played some instrument, and Lizzie Maddern, in a high comb and queer pantalettes, at the age of twelve, was the first cornet of the strolling band. It is a tradition in the family that

Lizzie Maddern at that age could score the music for the orchestra.

Little Minnie Maddern made her appearance on the stage at a very early age and in a most unconventional fashion. Her mother, while playing in New Orleans, was accustomed to leave the child at a hotel in care of a coloured nurse, who, perceiving that the baby was a sound sleeper, became negligent in the fulfilment of her duties. One night, while the nurse was away enjoying herself with friends, the baby woke up.

"I am sure that I remember it quite distinctly," said Mrs. Fiske, in telling the story. "There was a dim light in the room — and I was alone. Oh, the horrible idea! I had never, to my knowledge, been alone before in my life. First I was frightened; then I was indignant. I scrambled out of bed and began tugging on what clothes I could find, crying bitterly all the time, and with but one thought, — to find my mother. I had once

been taken to the theatre in the daytime, and I was determined to go there. At last, half-dressed, bareheaded, for my hat was in a big wardrobe and I would not have dared to open the door, I went out into the street. I have to this day a vivid recollection of how brilliant and interesting the streets were to my eyes that had never seen such sights before. I forgot to cry, I forgot to be frightened, and I saw some fascinating things before a good-natured fellow picked me up, discovered my identity, and took me safely to the theatre. I recall distinctly being held by my new friend and identified at the box-office; then being passed over to a boy who took me around to a narrow, dark door and carried me into a lumbery place and put me in a chair where I looked out into what seemed a bright, sunshiny world with queer trees and fairies. Just then I spied my mother. She was dressed like a fairy, and she was just coming out of a water-lily

—for it was the transformation scene of a spectacle. I was very much pleased with mamma's appearance. You see, I was a veritable child of the stage. I had no disapproval, even at so young an age, of tights, even when they were on my mother. I slipped right out of that chair, and, before any one saw what I was going to do, I ran right to her and began explaining my nurse's treachery. I am told that I was received with applause, and that my first appearance, even though it was impromptu, was a success. It was a bit irregular, but it was an appearance, and I hadn't a touch, even, of stage fright."

After that the child was kept in the theatre, cradled in a big trunk in her mother's dressing-room. It was not long, however, before her mother fashioned her a Scotch costume, and she was sent on the stage between the tragedy and the farce to sing about "Jamie Coming over the Meadow,"

and to dance the Highland fling. From that time until her marriage to Harrison Grey Fiske in 1890, with the exception of a few months here and there spent in different schools, Minnie Maddern was continuously on the stage.

Her first appearance in a play occurred when she was three years old. She played the Duke of York in Shakespeare's "Richard III." Who the Richard was Mrs. Fiske does not remember, but she told Miss Mildred Aldrich the following amusing story of another early experience:

"I began playing at three, or I might really say at two, and before I was twelve I had in my father's strolling company acted an old woman's part, when the old woman was sick and there was no one else to do it. But I can tell you of a very funny time when I played with Barry Sullivan. You know I did all the children in Shakespeare's plays with him, and often acted more than one

part. I remember distinctly the night that he first played 'Macbeth.' I must tell you first, that you may understand better, that the theatre was not to me what it is to children who are taken into it when they are old enough to realise it. I was almost born in it. I do not remember a time when it was not my home. It had no glamour to me. I knew no fear of it nor any great emotion about it. I just loved it naturally as other children love brothers and sisters.

"I was to play one of the apparitions in 'Macbeth.' I did not care much about learning parts; I had to be bribed to do that. On this occasion the piece was, as usual, put on in a hurry, and at rehearsal I stuck hopelessly in my speech. But, though I was only three, I had the assurance of an old stager. I made the stock declaration that I should be all right at night. Well, at night I wasn't 'all right,' but that didn't trouble me. I was put on

the trap, and a funny little ghost I must have been, with my bristling red curls and my nightgown, as, with a branch in my hand, I appeared before Sullivan, and with the temerity of an old actor began to fake my lines. I got out something about like this, and my voice must have been pretty shrill, for I was greeted with laughter: 'Be lion mettled, proud, and take no heed there perspirers are.' The audience shrieked, and Barry hissed between his teeth, 'Take her off! Take her off!' and I was unexpectedly lowered out of sight, quite disgusted, for I was very well satisfied with myself. Poor Sullivan! I remember he took me on his knee after the act, and plaintively remonstrated with me. He offered me lollipops if I would learn the lines before the next day. I had not then made the acquaintance of lollipops, but they sounded good, and I got my lines — and got the lollipops, for Barry was a man of his word."

When Laura Keene made her great production of Boucicault's "Hunted Down," Minnie Maddern was the Willie Lee, being then but five or six years old. She later played Prince Arthur in the notable revival of "King John" at Booth's Theatre, New York, with John McCullough, J. B. Booth, and Agnes Booth in the cast. Before attaining her fourteenth year she had acted many of the leading juvenile parts, and occasionally old women's parts, so remarkable was her adaptability. Long before she wore long dresses off the stage, she had assumed them in the theatre. When but twelve years of age she played François in "Richelieu," and Louise in "The Two Orphans." When thirteen she assumed old woman parts with astonishing success.

She was the original little Fritz in J. K. Emmett's New York productions of "Fritz" at both Wallack's Theatre and at Niblo's; she played Paul in "The Octoroon" in the

great Philadelphia production at the Chestnut Street Theatre; she played Franko in "Guy Mannering," when Mrs. Waller was the Meg Merriles; she was the Sybil in Carlotta LeClercq's production of "The Sheep in Wolf's Clothing;" she played Mary Morgan in "Ten Nights in a Barroom," when Yankee Locke produced it in Boston; she did the child in Oliver Doud Byron's spectacular production of "Across the Continent." She was at the Chestnut Street Theatre with E. L. Davenport, and played the child's parts in his repertory. When Augustin Daly produced "Monsieur Alphonse" at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, she was the Adrienne; when Mrs. Scott-Siddons first played "Frou-Frou" she was the Georgie. She played both Heinrich and Minna in "Rip Van Winkle," and she was the Eva of Bidwell's production of "Uncle Tom's Çabin." With Daly she also played the boy's part in "The

Bosom Friend," and Alfred in the first road production of "Divorce." Other parts were the child in "The Chicago Fire," produced in New York; Hilda in Emmett's "Karl and Hilda;" Ralph Rackstraw in Hooley's Juvenile Pinafore Company; and Clip in "A Messenger from Jarvis Section." At the age of ten she acted the Sun God in David Bidwell's "The Witch," at New Orleans, and she also appeared in "Aladdin," "The White Fawn," and other spectacular pieces.

Mrs. Fiske's recollections of Lucille Western, with whom she played a number of children's parts, are very vivid.

"I recall that in one play in which I appeared with her," said Mrs. Fiske, "I played the part of a little boy who died. I could not forget if I tried that haggard and despairing face that used to bend above me, as my little body became limp and still in my simulation of death — and with children the emotion of acting is much stronger

than most people think. After my eyes closed there always seemed to me a long, horrible silence. Then she grasped my arm with a force that well-nigh made me scream. 'Willie! Willie!' she called, quickly, harshly, but with such entreaty that I found it difficult not to open my eyes and reply. Child though I was, I could feel her suffer. Then she lay me down, oh, so carefully, so gently, and through my closed lids I felt her look at me, just as I felt, rather than heard, her whisper, 'He is dead.' I heard the curtain roll down; I heard the cheers of the audience, but the great woman seemed to think only of me. 'My darling, my darling,' she cried, as I sat up cheerfully in my property cot, 'did I hurt your little baby arm? I am so forgetful, so rough. I know I hurt you.' 'Not a bit,' I said, stoutly, though I could hardly move the poor abused member. Then Lucille Western laughed with delight, as she called, 'I say, Pike, this girl's got the

stuff in her,' and she hit me a thump on the back, almost as painful as my wrenched arm. We have lived by the age of Lucille Westerns, but they were great in their time."

At the age of sixteen Miss Maddern became a star. At that time Lotta, Maggie Mitchell, and Annie Pixley were at the height of their success in a variety of dramatic fare called "protean pieces," plays, or rather entertainments, that depended for popularity entirely on the leading performer's personality. Some undiscerning person, deceived by Miss Maddern's girlish figure, curly red hair, and odd individuality, thought that he saw in her a second Lotta, and accordingly brought her out at the Park Theatre, New York, May 20, 1882, in "Fogg's Ferry." She was unsuited for that kind of work, and what impression she made was due to her thorough stage training. In 1883 she appeared in "The Storm Child." In 1885 she produced Steele Mackaye's ver-

sion of Sardou's "Andrea," which he called "In Spite of All." "The Child Wife" and "The Puritan Maid" followed in 1886, "Caprice" in 1887, "Lady Jemima" in 1888, and "Featherbrain" in 1889.

In March, 1890, she became the wife of Harrison Grey Fiske, of the New York *Dramatic Mirror*, and retired from the stage for three years. It is not generally known that this was her second venture into matrimony. When only a girl she was married, contrary to the desires of her friends, to LeGrande White, a musician, who managed her first starring tour and from whom she was afterward divorced. During her retirement Mrs. Fiske acted occasionally in benefit performances. She also did considerable literary work, writing a number of short stories and several plays, among them "A Light from St. Agnes," first played by herself in December, 1895; "Not Guilty," "Grandpapa," "The Rose," played by the Rosina Vokes company

with Felix Morris in the leading character; "The Dream of Matthew Wayne," "John Doe," dramatised from a sketch by Mr. Fiske; "Fontenelle," written in collaboration with Mr. Fiske and produced by James O'Neill, and "The Countess Roudine," in which Mrs. Fiske collaborated with Paul Kester, and which was produced by Modjeska.

Mrs. Fiske's return to the stage in the fall of 1893 was signalised by a remarkable impersonation of Nora in Ibsen's "A Doll's House," which immediately attracted critical attention. She then produced in November in Boston a play by her husband, called "Hester Crewe." This was a disastrous failure, and two years more of private life followed, when she again started out, touring the West and South, playing at first Marie Deloche in "The Queen of Liars," an adaptation of Daudet's "La Menteuse." This was followed with productions of "A Doll's House," Daudet's "A White Pink," her own

"A Light from St. Agnes," Dumas's "La Femme de Claude," Sardou's "Divorçons," and "A Right to Happiness," afterward called "Love Finds the Way." On March 2, 1897, at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, New York, she made her greatest success in Lorimer Stoddard's dramatisation of Thomas Hardy's novel "Tess of the D'Urbervilles." Mrs. Fiske continued to be the same assiduous producer last season, during which she brought out Mrs. Oscar Beringer's "A Bit of Old Chelsea," Horace B. Fry's "Little Italy," a little one-act tragedy of more than ordinary worth and a realistic study of a bit of metropolitan life never before presented in the theatre, "Frou-Frou," and "Magda."

Mrs. Fiske's "Tess" is a personation of tremendous intensity and startling realism. Its emotional phases are expressed with the utmost quietness, but with a power that never fails to reach the heart of the most unimpressible spectator. It is a marvellous

exhibition of the inherent force of suppression. The crescendo in Mrs. Fiske's characterisation is remarkable; there is constantly increasing suspense and continually growing emotional force until the break comes just after the murder of Alec. The pitiful seriousness and the pathetic happiness of the woman in her love for Angel Clare; her realisation after marriage that her disgrace is still her own secret; her confession and that despairing plea, "Don't leave me! Please, don't leave me!" the desperation that drives her again to Alec, and finally the killing of the wretch, — all these are great moments with the actress, each contributing its exact proportion to the unity of her creation. The person that sees "Tess" for the first time is so moved by the tragedy that is passing on the stage that he takes little account of the actress's art, an involuntary tribute that he pays to her spontaneity and naturalness.

Mrs. Fiske's ability in comedy is splendidly shown in "Divorçons." She acts the drama with a refined abandon that is positively captivating, making Cyprienne deliciously capricious and delightfully feminine. There is a piquancy about her performance that is difficult to describe, and a zest in the way she makes her points that establishes them with wonderful clearness.

CHAPTER V.

IDA CONQUEST.

Ida Conquest made her first appearance as a professional actress with Alexander Salvini in 1892 at a special matinée performance at the Tremont Theatre, Boston, of "Rohan, the Silent," in which she played Isobel. A few weeks previous to that she had gained considerable notice by her work in two dramas acted at the Columbia Theatre, Boston, by students of the American Academy of Dramatic Arts, and she was also well known in that city as an amateur actress. Her first stage experience, however, began when she was only eight years old as Little Buttercup in the Boston Museum juvenile production of "Pinafore," in which she appeared over three hundred times.

Miss Conquest is a Boston girl, the daughter of Thomas Conquest, a prominent merchant of that city. She is a blonde of extremely attractive features, with golden, gleaming hair and deep blue eyes. She has not the unexpressive baby face, so often associated with the blonde type of feminine beauty, but there is an abundance of character in her finely chiselled nose and firmly rounded chin. She is tall, lithe, and graceful, — well set up, as the West Pointer would say.

After her success with Mr. Salvini Miss Conquest was engaged by A. M. Palmer, with whom she remained until his company was disbanded. Coming under Daniel Frohman's management, she was seen as Phyllis Lee in "The Charity Ball," Carey in "Alabama," Sybil in "The Dancing Girl," and in "Americans Abroad." In 1895 she became a member of Charles Frohman's Empire Theatre company, with which she acted Musette in "Bohemia," Justine Emptage in

"The Benefit of a Doubt," Lady Belton in "Marriage," Amy Chilworth in "Liberty Hall," Renée de Cochefort (also played by Viola Allen) in "Under the Red Robe," and Babiole in "The Conquerors." She also played in London in "Too Much Johnson" with William Gillette.

Last season Miss Conquest met with great success in Boston in Mr. Gillette's delightful farce, "Because She Loved Him So," creating the part of the jealous wife when that play was produced at the Boston Museum in December, 1898. She displayed splendid abilities as a light comedy actress, developing the character along mock-heroic lines, and playing it with a seriousness that was keenly ludicrous and yet absolutely without a touch of burlesque. Her jealous tirades were full of unconscious humour, and she walked through the most absurd situations with a serenity that added tenfold to their ridiculousness.

CHAPTER VI.

BLANCHE WALSH.

BLANCHE WALSH was for a number of years estimated as a more than ordinarily capable actress, but not until she fell heiress last season to the Sardou drama, with which the late Fanny Davenport had been identified in this country, were the breadth and force and fine dramatic quality of her talent discovered. Miss Walsh was the leading lady of a Denver stock company when she received the "Antony and Cleopatra" manuscript and a notice to report in New York for rehearsals at the earliest possible moment. She closed with the Denver Company on Wednesday and arrived in New York the following Friday, letter perfect in a

part of unusual length. "Fedora" and "La Tosca" were mastered in the same marvellous fashion, for Miss Walsh is what stage folks term a wonder as a "quick study." When she took the heroine's rôle in "Secret Service" at short notice, it was stated that she required only ten hours thoroughly to acquire a part.

It is too late a day to find fault with the strongly theatrical flavour of the Sardou plays of the past ten years. Their artificiality, sensationalism, and claptrap are apparent. Nevertheless they are an effective medium for the variety of acting of which Sarah Bernhardt is the extreme exponent, acting that is entirely art, and which makes its effects by using the body as a kind of emotional instrument. The theory is that an emotion is first of all mentally conceived and then mechanically expressed by the perfectly trained body. It allows little for spontaneity, and it scorns absolutely the actor who "loses himself in his part."

When I say that Miss Walsh is a splendid example of this school of acting, I give her great praise. I certainly never saw Sardou's Cleopatra played better than she played it, not even by the divine Sarah herself. I do not mean to imply that Miss Walsh is the mistress of the art of acting that Bernhardt is, for such a statement would be absurd. But the Sardou Cleopatra, which Bernhardt's great art only tended to cheapen, Miss Walsh, because of greater temperamental sympathy, perhaps, was able to make a living, breathing being. It was the human quality in Miss Walsh's conception that was its most striking feature. Hers was a Cleopatra easily understood, a Cleopatra that won sympathy, a quality I never before found in this Sardou character. In physical appearance Miss Walsh almost personifies passion, for her beauty is of a warm Southern type, her hair of shining jet, and her eyes black and burning. Often in modern rôles she has

seemed cold and statuesque, but her Cleopatra, while queenly, was warm-blooded and fervid.

In "La Tosca" and "Fedora" Miss Walsh was equally successful, her Fedora particularly being a most beautiful picture. The "strong" scene at the end of the third act was powerfully played, and her portrayal of the woman sacrificing her reputation to save her lover's life (a Frenchy conception, by the way, that does not convincingly appeal to an American audience) was very vivid. The death scene was realistic and exceedingly artistic. It did not horrify; rather say it grieved.

Blanche Walsh is a New York girl, the daughter of Thomas Power Walsh, at one time the warden of the Tombs, and up to the time of his death in June, 1899, a well-known character of the famous Sixth Ward. She was born on January 4, 1873, and went to Public School No. 50 until she was gradu-

ated in 1886. Her first public appearance occurred in June, 1887, at a benefit performance in the Windsor Theatre. Miss Walsh played Desdemona, and the occasion was in many respects a memorable one, for the whole East Side was interested in the début of "Fatty" Walsh's girl as an actress.

Her first professional engagement was with Thomas McDonough in a small part in the melodrama, "Siberia." When she was only sixteen years old she was engaged to play Olivia in Marie Wainwright's production of "Twelfth Night," and she remained with Miss Wainwright three seasons, appearing as Zamora in "The Honeymoon," Florence Marygold in "My Uncle's Will," Madeline in "Frederic Lemaitre," Grace Harkaway in "London Assurance," and Queen Elizabeth in "Amy Robsart." Her Elizabeth was really a remarkable impersonation, especially when one considered that

Miss Walsh at the time was only nineteen years old. It was characterised by a dignity majestic and regal, and a beauty of face and figure that certainly never belonged to the original of the character. Miss Walsh deservedly received much praise, and as a result she took a step forward in her profession.

Under Charles Frohman's management Miss Walsh created the rôle of Diana Stockton in Bronson Howard's "Aristocracy," produced in September, 1892, and continued with this play for two seasons. She next appeared as Kate Kennion in "The Girl I Left behind Me," and on January 1, 1895, joined Nat Goodwin, playing the heroines in "A Gilded Fool," "In Mizzoura," "David Garrick," "The Nominee," "The Gold Mine," and "Lend Me Five Shillings." After this came a season of summer stock in Washington, during which time she had the leading parts in "Pink Dominoes," "My

Awful Dad," "American Assurance," "My Wife's Mother," and also played Romeo in E. A. Lancaster's one-act piece, "Romeo's First Love." This was a curious little play, founded on Romeo's unreciprocated love for Rosaline, referred to in the first act of "Romeo and Juliet." The author endeavoured to imagine scenes that might have taken place between Rosaline and Romeo, just previous to the time when Romeo accompanied Benvolio and Mercutio to the Capulet's ball and there met Juliet. Besides acting Romeo, Miss Walsh superintended the production of the play, stage-managed it, selected the costumes, and drilled the company.

She was next heard of as the adventuress, Mrs. Bulford, in "The Great Diamond Robbery," produced in New York City in 1895. In November she assumed the part of Trilby at the Garden Theatre, New York, and played it for the remainder of the

season. This was another instance of a remarkably quick study. She was coming from a rehearsal at noon when she was told that Virginia Harned, who, by the way, was the original stage Trilby, was ill, and there was no one to play the character at the afternoon performance, which began at two o'clock. It hardly seemed possible that Miss Walsh could do more than read the part, yet at two o'clock she went on, seemingly letter perfect, and acted as if she had had days instead of minutes to prepare herself for the rôle.

Rejoining Nat Goodwin's company, she went with him to Australia, assuming all the characters she had previously played with him, and in addition acting Lydia Languish in "The Rivals," and Louise in "Gringoire." Returning to America, in October, 1896, she originated the part of Margaret Neville in "Heartease," with Palmer's stock company. In January, Miss

Walsh played in "Straight from the Heart," in New York, appearing in the dual rôle of the brother and sister, Harold and Clara Nugent.

She was then called upon to take at short notice the character of Edith Varney in William Gillette's "Secret Service." She saw the play for the first time on a Tuesday evening, and with one rehearsal played the part the following night, and for the remainder of the Boston engagement, sailing for England May 5, 1897, and opening with "Secret Service," at the Adelphi Theatre, London.

On her return to America she played for two weeks with "Secret Service," at the Empire Theatre, New York, then with Sol Smith Russell in "A Bachelor's Romance," at the Garden Theatre. In January, 1898, she returned to the Empire Theatre, playing Jeanne Marie in "The Conquerors." On May twentieth, she joined the Herald Square

stock company. She next became leading lady of the Manhattan Beach Stock Company of Denver, which position she left for her starring tour in the Sardou drama with Melbourne MacDowell.

CHAPTER VII.

ANNIE RUSSELL.

In England they called Annie Russell "the Duse of the English-speaking stage." This appellation, flattering though it may seem, does not convey a correct idea of Miss Russell's personality. It is true that in the superficial aspects of her art, in her method of physical expression, in the quietness of her acting, and in her freedom from merely conventional pantomime, Miss Russell does remind one of the great Italian; but in the fundamental factors of individuality and temperament, the two are widely different. Duse is an actress of tremendous emotional power, a woman of suffering, the epitome of passion and tragedy; Miss Rus-

sell, on the other hand, is a tender, sensitive plant, pathetic rather than emotional, and she no more suggests passion than an iceberg suggests the tropics. Duse, too, is entirely out of sympathy with the spirit of comedy, while Miss Russell has a quaint, delicate humour that is like a burst of sunshine on an April day. Thoroughly honest and sincere, loving and believing in her art, sweetly womanly and beautifully sympathetic by nature, Annie Russell stands alone as a subtle portrayer of sentiment, that keenly sensitive emotion which a false touch so quickly transforms into mawkishness and ridicule.

Miss Russell was born in 1864, in Liverpool, England, but went with her family to Canada when she was very young. None of her family ever had anything to do with the stage, and her becoming an actress was largely a matter of financial necessity. "It never entered my head as a girl that I should ever be an actress," said Miss Russell, in

speaking of her early life. "If I had uttered such a thought I should at once have received a mild rebuke from my mother, who at that time shared the almost universal prejudice against the stage of country people of her generation. I am sure she would have fainted if any one had told her that not only her two daughters, prim little girls, but also baby Tommie — afterward one of the best known of the Little Lord Fauntleroys, but then just beginning to lisp his first words — would in after years be 'stage folk.'

"From a little child," added Miss Russell, "my ambition was to be an authoress. My first and only attempt in the realms of literature was received in terms of unstinted praise by the few friends that were permitted to read the manuscript. After a great deal of thought as to which of the weekly papers should be allowed to launch a new star on the literary firmament, I sent my story to a well-known periodical, accompanied, more as

a matter of form than anything else, with stamps for its return. After two weeks of anxious waiting, one morning I received a suspiciously thick package, bearing in the corner the name of the paper to which I had sent my story. I hurried up-stairs to my own little room, imagining all kinds of causes for such a lengthy reply. Perhaps they wanted me to write another and longer story, and had sent me a rough outline of the plot, together with further instructions. 'Yes, that must be it,' I thought. I broke the seal, opened the folded sheets and was confronted by my own story, together with a printed slip informing me that my manuscript was returned, not necessarily because of lack of literary merit, but it was not exactly suited to their pages. It was a death-blow to my literary ambitions. I laid the story away in a bureau drawer, and I never was guilty of a second offence."

Miss Russell's fondness for the stage was

developed by amateur theatricals, and her first appearance was at a church fair. The leading woman in the play that was to be presented was taken ill at the last moment, and Annie Russell, then a bit of a girl with a reputation among her schoolmates for rapid memorising, was called into service. She surprised herself by being the hit of the piece. Then she became a member of a dramatic club, and from that to the professional stage proved to be but a step. The circumstances of her début at the age of ten years Miss Russell relates as follows:

"Miss Rose Eytinge was coming to Montreal to play 'Miss Multon,' and as she carried only one child to play the boy, Paul, she wrote to the local manager, requesting him to engage a girl for the part of Jeanne and to have her perfect by the time of the star's arrival. The manager advertised for a young girl, mamma took me down, and in the end I was given the part. I need scarcely

say I was very proud, for it was quite long and important. Miss Eytinge arrived, and I was summoned to rehearsal. When she saw me she was dreadfully put out. She sent for the manager. 'What's this?' she cried, pointing to me. 'The child you asked me to get,' he answered, meekly. 'I said a girl, not a child. Go and get me a girl, or a young woman who can play a girl. Get me somebody.' The manager protested that the desired article was not to be found in Montreal. 'Don't tell me that,' returned Miss Eytinge. 'Go and scour the town,' and then she reiterated her formula, 'Get me somebody.'

"The full significance of this scene had slowly dawned upon me. I retired in the wings and set up a dismal howling. 'Come here, child,' said Miss Eytinge, whose attention had been attracted — it couldn't well help having been attracted — by my vigorous outburst of grief. 'Do you want to play

this part very much?' I assured her I did. 'Well, if you have learned it, let me hear you.' She went through the lines with me and she seemed satisfied. Of course Jeanne ought really to be about thirteen or fourteen, but I pleased her, and she arranged with mamma to take me into her company for the remainder of the season. When that closed she advised that I should go to New York. The advice was followed, and I soon got an engagement with that stage children's catapult, Haverly's juvenile 'Pinafore.' At first I was only in the chorus, but afterward I sang Josephine. I was two years with Haverly."

When Miss Russell left Haverly she obtained an engagement with E. A. McDowell to play in the West Indies, and she appeared as everything from young girls to old women. "I shouldn't have had as much experience in five years in a city theatre," she said. Her first important engagement was as Es-

meralda at the Madison Square Theatre, New York, when she was sixteen years old. How she successfully fooled the stage manager, and was engaged for the title rôle, is best told in her own words:

"My dresses even then were not very long, and my hair flowed down my back. The manager looked down on me from his towering height, and decided in his wisdom that I was too youthful. He and I only exchanged a few words, and as I felt sure that among the multitude of applicants he would not remember me, I determined to play a little trick. So I went home, put on a long dress, did my hair up neatly, and, assuming as ancient and demure an expression as I could, went to see him again. He fell into the snare, and I got the part."

"Esmeralda" was one of the great successes of stage history. Miss Russell, herself, appeared in the play about nine hundred times, 350 of them in New York. She gave

up the part in 1882 when she was married to Eugene Wiley Presbrey. Her next venture was in another great success, "Hazel Kirke." After that she played Fusha Leach in "Moths," but her attempt to carry off the breezy American girl visiting European watering-places was more diverting than successful. Later came Maggie, the Highland lassie in Gilbert's "Engaged;" Lady Vavir in Gilbert's fairy-like comedy, "Broken Hearts;" Sylvia Spencer in "Our Society," and Ada Houghton in "Sealed Instructions."

But her greatest success, next to "Esmeralda," was in "Elaine," which was produced at the Madison Square Theatre in December, 1887. The drama was by Harry Edwards and George Parsons Lathrop, and it was given a remarkable production and a memorable cast, in which were, among others, Alexander Salvini, Marie Burroughs, Minnie Seligiman, who made her début in

this play, and E. M. Holland. "Elaine," however, pictorial as it was, could hardly be called a success, but regarding Miss Russell's work another verdict must be recorded. "No one who ever saw that play," said a Boston critic, "needs to be reminded of Miss Russell's performance of the title rôle. The word exquisite is not misapplied in speaking of it. Bostonians had in their imaginations an ideal of the appearance of Elaine, inspired by Rosenfeld's painting, but his Elaine was much less spirituelle than the one that Miss Russell presented. The Elaine of the painting was a robust, healthy, but beautiful creature. The Elaine of Annie Russell was the ethereal being that a breath might have blown away, and who looked as if she might indeed fade away to death as her heart broke. In no part that Annie Russell ever attempted was she so completely lost as in Elaine. It was a most complete and harmonious, a most poetic yet real performance."

Miss Russell had decided opinions about Elaine, as, indeed, she has about all her characters. When asked if she considered it the most satisfactory part that she had ever played, she answered:

"I am not quite sure it was. I never felt absolutely convinced that I succeeded in doing what I hoped to with the part, or all that could be done. I tried to avoid what is usually called 'acting,' and to impersonate Elaine, if you understand what I mean. I wanted to live, move, breathe the part, — to be, in fact, Elaine. I was convinced that the simpler I was in such a rôle the more artistic I would be. But I was never wholly satisfied. To me there were always touches in it that seemed theatrical. But then, I am my own most severe critic, and the moments of elation in which one feels an inward conviction that one has been right and achieved worthily what one wished, moments which all players must have, come very rarely to

me. Yet I am very ambitious. No actress was ever more anxious to have things to do, parts that demand something of me, that I can think out and then give life to out of myself. But such opportunities, I need not tell you, come but seldom to any of us."

Miss Russell's last appearance before her retirement from the stage in 1889, on account of ill health, was in "Captain Swift," made famous in London by Beerbohm Tree. Five years of pain and suffering followed, and for a long time it was not expected that she would ever act again. She recovered her health, however, and 1894 returned to the theatre, presenting first a one-act play called "Lethe." Then she was seen in "The New Woman" and "The Fatal Card." Then she became Nat Goodwin's leading lady, appearing as Ruth in "Ambition," Ada Ingot in "David Garrick," and in "The Gilded Fool." The following year she produced the one-act play,

"Dangerfield, '95," which made a great hit, and starred in "Sue," a Bret Harte drama of sentiment, which was also very successful. These two plays she took to London in the spring of 1898, and both were kindly received. Miss Russell's account of her London experiences is amusing:

"I arrived in England Saturday and made my London début the following Thursday. In between I came to the realisation that I was to be the last straw. Every one told me there had been so many American actors, — that, in fact, the English were antagonistic to this continuous American invasion, — and here was I, the final blow! Then, to add to my discomfort, — my terror, — I had made a tour of the London theatres. I was to appear in 'Dangerfield, '95.' In London, one-act plays are literally curtain raisers. No one thinks of paying any attention. I had made up my mind to be a failure when I stepped on the stage. It slanted like the

stages of the olden time. It was old and had little ridges over it. Before the curtain went up I could hear the pit making remarks. They talked about American cheek. I appeared, and — well, the next day I knew I was a success. It was after seeing 'Sue' that they called me 'the Duse of the English-speaking stage.' Am I proud of that? Well, rather. They said, too, that I had only a very slight American accent.

"The last night," continued Miss Russell, "I made a speech, my first and only one, and I was so overcome that I couldn't finish it. They called me out six times. They shouted and cheered. They cried, 'Come back!' And then I said — well, I don't know what I said, except that I'd never made a speech before and didn't know how."

Last season Miss Russell appeared in Henri Lavedan's "Catherine," being a member of, rather than a star in, the most perfectly balanced cast seen for many a year in an

American theatre. Miss Russell's Catherine was a splendid conception, wonderfully finely drawn; a girl, quiet, shy, and gentle, pictured with humour inexpressibly delicate, with the quintessence of refinement and with pathos profoundly moving; later, a woman of flint-like stability of purpose, of independence, pride, and resolution. The successful production of such a work as "Catherine" was a notable event. Although the product of a French author, the drama had the unusual merit of being a world play; that is to say, its theme is unrestricted in its application to human life. In any land where there is social intercourse, among any people where there is wealth and where there is poverty, "Catherine" would be understood. Yet the story, which is simply that of a nobleman's marriage to a poor music teacher, and of the misunderstandings and unhappiness that result from that marriage, is treated entirely from a Gallic standpoint. The plot is trite,

to be sure, but it is true to life. The action is quiet but realistic, and the characters are drawn with remarkable fidelity to nature It is a regrettable fact that the last act of the play is weak, due largely to the fact that the question of caste, which the playwright raises, admits of no general answer. The drama is unique in that it presents a heroine with whom the majority of the audience is not in sympathy. The character of Catherine is also somewhat colourless, besides being devoid of startling contrasts, conditions that make all the more praiseworthy Miss Russell's convincing acting.

CHAPTER VIII.

ISABEL IRVING.

WHEN Isabel Irving played in London with Augustin Daly's company several seasons ago, she was dubbed "a dainty rogue in porcelain," and one might search for a long time, and then not find a phrase that so accurately describes the impression made upon one by the actress's naïve personality and her ingenuous and delicately artificial method of dramatic expression. On the stage she never suggests any great depth or underlying force of character, and she could never successfully impersonate a character calling for passion or grief. Her disposition is sunshiny and bright; she is a child of joy and innocent pleasure, whose

nature would instinctively shrink from pain, and whom suffering would kill. One sees in her face — a face that one instantly calls pretty, as distinguished from handsome — refinement and youthful interest.

"It is the spring violet order of beauty, frank, delicate, and innocent," declared C. M. S. McLellan. "It lacks dramatic luminousness, is more suffused with tender surprise than kindled with fiery emotions. Miss Irving looks always as if she had been startled, but only by a noise, not by a vulgarity. She scarcely suggests art. She suggests gleams and visions. Instead of sustaining a theatric situation, she sustains the purple bloom of youth's delicious fancies."

I can imagine no rôle more fitted to Miss Irving's peculiar temperament than that of Lady Jessica, which she acted last season with John Drew's company in Henry Arthur Jones's satirical comedy, "The Liars." The

character was that of a butterfly of fashion married to a Londoner of somewhat prosaic notions. Finding her home life a little dull and monotonous, and her husband more practical than romantic, Lady Jessica entangled herself in an audacious flirtation with a passionate African explorer, whom nothing would satisfy short of an elopement and an idyllic existence in some far-away place where they two should be the whole world. Frightened at his impetuosity and at the results of her own naughtiness, the little woman wrung her hands helplessly, and finally solved the problem by shifting the burden of responsibility for her salvation on the shoulders of her friends. Freed from the idea that she must do something for herself, the frivolous wife recovered her natural gaiety of manner, while she regarded with complacency the efforts of others to ward off a public scandal. Occasionally, she interested herself enough in the affair to

offer advice, which was ridiculously foolish and vexatiously inadequate. Miss Irving acted the part deliciously, and without apparent effort made Lady Jessica so delightful and fascinating that one could not help loving her, even at the moments when he most of all wanted to box her ears, and send her supperless to bed.

Miss Irving was born in Bridgeport, Conn., and before she went on the stage, just after she left school, she had never even so much as acted in private theatricals. Her first engagement was with Rosina Vokes, and her début was made at the Standard Theatre, New York, in February, 1887, as Ermyntrude Johnson in Pinero's farce, "The School Mistress." Later she was given the part of Gwendolin Hawkins in the same play. During her next season with Miss Vokes she acted such rôles as the maid Perkins in "A Double Lesson," Miss Violet in "A Pantomine Rehearsal,"

Rose Dalrymple in "In Honour Bound," and Edith Leslie in "The Widow's Device." In spite of the fact that Miss Irving was absolutely ignorant of stage requirements when she became a member of Miss Vokes's company, she is said to have played her first part at short notice. She undoubtedly owes much of her success to Miss Vokes, who was not only an admirable stage director, but also a woman whose very personality inspired confidence and afforded encouragement.

In the fall of 1888 Miss Irving joined the Daly company, with which she was connected six years, in that time visiting England three times with the organisation. She also accompanied the Daly players to Paris, where she acted one week, appearing in Ada Rehan's part in "The Lottery of Love," at the Vaudeville Theatre, where this play was originally produced in French as "Les Surprises du Divorce." Some of her best

known characters while with Mr. Daly were Audrey in "As You Like It," Oberon in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," Helen in "The Hunchback," and the juvenile comedy parts in "Nancy & Co.," "Railroad of Love," "A Night Off," and "The Orient Express."

In the middle of the London engagement of 1894 Miss Irving resigned her position in the Daly company, and that fall she was engaged by Daniel Frohman to play Lady Noeline in "The Amazons," in one of his road companies. Soon after, when Georgia Cayvan retired from the Lyceum Theatre Company, Miss Irving succeeded her as leading lady, appearing first as Dorothea March in Sardou's play, "A Woman's Silence." For the last two seasons she has been with John Drew, whose chief support she became when Maude Adams left his company.

CHAPTER IX.

MAXINE ELLIOTT.

MAXINE ELLIOTT began her theatrical career as a stage beauty. Unmistakably a brunette, with hair and eyes of inky blackness, she had none of the warmth that is associated with the brunette type. She was a New Englander by birth, and a New Englander in spirit, and in those early days she exhibited in abundance all the coldness and indifference of an unsympathetic temperament so often characteristic of the descendants from Puritan ancestry. Statuesque described her exactly. A face and a figure chiselled in marble by a master hand could have been no more perfect than were hers, nor could they have been more

expressive of self-centred and self-possessed dignity; neither would the marble image have conveyed any more surely the sense of inanimateness than did the living woman. For, while there was physical perfection in the first Maxine Elliott, and classic beauty in those features, clear-cut as a cameo, nowhere was there aught to indicate human sympathy. Her acting, too, was chaste and formal, without inspiration, without conviction, and without colour. Her temperament appeared dramatically sterile, and its coldness and reserve seemed to partake of the barrenness and bleakness of her native wintry State of Maine.

The New Englander is naturally not an actor, chiefly because of the New England conscience, which is a genuine handicap, even to those that have wandered far from the paths of correct living and truth, as marked out by the fathers. The New England conscience, as you would know if you had

one, is a tragic reality, which, with smirking hypocrisy, and under false pretences, has for over two centuries been mercilessly throttling all the pleasures in life that it could get its hands on. It is not a conscience like those that the little boys and girls have whose lives make such interesting and instructive reading for Sunday school scholars; it is not a voice that wakes children, usually between midnight and two o'clock in the morning, and tells them what is good and what is evil. The New England conscience does not talk much, and its instinctive judgments are generally so silly that they do very little harm. What it does persistently provoke, however, is involuntary and undesirable self-examination, which in turn leads to exasperating self-sciousness. Self-consciousness breeds reserve and the accompanying suppression of all outward expression of the emotions. Here you have the explanation of the New Eng-

lander's coldness. Moreover, emotion, constantly suppressed, does not develop. That is the reason for the New Englander's lack of sympathy. In a person without warmth, without sympathy, and without emotional activity, one can hardly expect to find the dramatic temperament. And Maxine Elliott was a typical New Englander when she went on the stage.

Then suddenly and unexpectedly she changed in a most astonishing and complete fashion. The grovelling worm became a beautiful butterfly. The emotionally unresponsive being somehow or other shook off the plethora of the New England conscience, and bloomed forth into glorious womanhood. She stopped posing, for she knew how to act ; she acquired spontaneity, passion, and sincerity ; most wonderful of all, she developed a touch of humour. Her beauty, more fascinating than ever in its animated loveliness, lost its statuesque un-

reality and immobility, and became human. Miss Elliott is not the first actress to be developed from apparently unpromising material, and the mystery in her case comes from the amazing abruptness of the change. Her growth first became overwhelmingly evident last season in her impersonation of Alice Adams, in "Nathan Hale." This was a curious play, embracing farce, tragedy, comedy, and melodrama, whose merits were absurdly overrated. It was very well acted, and its patriotic sentiments made it go with its audiences. Miss Elliott's rôle was quite the dominating feature, and she was by far the most interesting person on the stage. This was due to the fact that she was positive in speech and action, while Mr. Goodwin's Nathan Hale was largely negative, a character that was continually being acted upon, and which almost never took the initiative. Miss Elliott's love-making and coquetry in the early acts of the play were

delightful. Her playing of the parting scene with Hale, after he had volunteered as a spy, was especially strong, and the difference between the three varieties of pathos — the unsuccessful plea, the resentful pride that followed failure, and the despair when she was left alone — was finely indicated and forcibly presented. The sobbing farewell just before Hale's death, in which no word was spoken, was a masterly pantomimic triumph.

Miss Elliott was born in Rockland, Maine, and was educated in the Notre Dame Academy in Roxbury, Massachusetts. After she finished school she went with her father, who was a sea-captain, on a voyage to South America and Spain. When she returned, she started for New York, determined to go on the stage. She was then about sixteen years old, and apparently stage-struck to the very last degree. She wanted a career, she said, and she wished to be independent. The best she could do at first was to fill a think-

ing part in A. M. Palmer's company; to put it plainly, she was a "supe." Then her beauty got her an engagement with T. Henry French to appear as an Oriental houri or something like that in "The Voyage de Suzette." This spectacle was a dreadful failure.

Her serious dramatic work began when she became a member of E. S. Willard's company in 1890, during the English actor's first tour of this country. Her first rôle was Felica Umfraville in "The Middleman," and she also played Virginia Fleetwood in "John Needham's Double." The next season she remained with Willard, and was advanced a peg, being given the part of Beatrice Selwyn in "A Fool's Paradise," and later, that of Lady Gilding in "The Professor's Love Story." In the spring of 1893, she was the original Violet Woodman in "The Prodigal Daughter," when that play was produced at the American Theatre in New York. The

following spring she was the Kate Malcolm in "Sister Mary" with Julia Arthur, and then she joined Rose Coghlan, appearing as Dora in "Diplomacy," Grace Harkaway in "London Assurance," Alice Varney in "Forget-Me-Not," and Mrs. Allenby in "A Woman of No Importance."

While a member of Augustin Daly's company, with which she became connected after leaving Miss Coghlan, Miss Elliott improved much in finesse and in stage deportment. She went with the company to London in 1895, which was her first appearance in that city, and her marvellous beauty attracted any amount of attention. Miss Elliott made her début at Daly's in the title rôle of "A Heart of Ruby." She also appeared in "The Orient Express," "A Bundle of Lies," and "A Tragedy Rehearsal." Her first Shakespearian part was Silvia in "Two Gentlemen of Verona," and her other Shakespearian rôles were Hermia in "A Midsummer Night's

Dream" and Olivia in "Twelfth Night." After closing with Daly, Miss Elliott played a summer engagement with the Daniel Frawley company in San Francisco. When Nat Goodwin, whose wife she now is, returned from Australia in 1896, she joined his company and since that time she has continued to be Mr. Goodwin's leading lady. At the end of last season she went with him to London, appearing in "The Cowboy and the Lady" and "An American Citizen."

CHAPTER X.

ADA REHAN.

AFTER a quarter-century on the stage, during which time she has played over 150 parts, Ada Rehan is to-day, as, in fact, she has been for the past ten years, America's representative actress. Not only have her exceptional and versatile talents afforded pleasure to thousands of theatre-goers on this side of the Atlantic, but she is equally well known abroad, where her fine art and graceful personality are held in the highest esteem. Beginning at the bottom of the histrionic ladder and climbing upward by means of faithful endeavour and increasing artistic worth, she reached, as leading lady of Augustin Daly's company, and later as

star, a foremost position in the dramatic world, a position which she has retained through an ability not far from genius.

Ada Rehan was born in Limerick, Ireland, April 22, 1860. Her family name is Crehan, and the interesting anecdote is told that when she made her début on the stage some blundering printer gave her the name on the playbill of Ada C. Rehan. She liked the change, and adopted " Rehan " permanently. The story seems likely enough, but it is probably not true. Certain it is that she made her first theatrical ventures as a Crehan, as is shown by an old playbill of the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, under date of 1874, which plainly announces her as Ada Crehan. Miss Rehan was brought to this country when she was five years old, and her childhood was passed in Brooklyn, New York. Her two older sisters, one Mrs. Oliver Doud Byron and the other Mrs. R. Fulton Russell, known to the playgoing pub-

lic as Miss Hattie Russell, both adopted the dramatic profession, and it was undoubtedly this fact that turned the youngest sister's steps toward the theatre. She was thirteen years old when she made her first appearance, at Newark, New Jersey, in Oliver Doud Byron's play, "Across the Continent," in which she acted Clara for one night only to fill a vacancy caused by a performer's illness. Her first appearance on the New York stage was during the same season at Wood's Museum, where she played with Mr. Byron's company a small part in "Thoroughbred."

Her first regular professional engagement was at the Arch Street Theatre, Philadelphia, then under the management of Mrs. John Drew. Miss Rehan became a member of this company in 1873 and remained with it for three seasons. It is a curious fact that in the company at the time, and also as a beginner, was John Drew, who for so many years played opposite parts to Miss Rehan

in Daly's Theatre. Leaving Philadelphia, she acted for a season in Macauley's Theatre, Louisville, and she was a member of the company when, in November, 1875, Mary Anderson made her first appearance on any stage. Miss Rehan was then for two years with John W. Albaugh's company, acting sometimes in Albany, New York, and sometimes in Baltimore. During this engagement she was associated with such stars as Edwin Booth, Adelaide Neilson, and John McCullough, playing, among other characters, Ophelia to Booth's Hamlet and Queen Anne and Virginia to McCullough's Richard III. and Virginius. A few of the many parts that Miss Rehan played in these early times were: Anne Leigh, "Enoch Arden;" Barbara Hare, "East Lynne;" Bianca, "Taming of the Shrew;" Celia, "As You Like It;" Cordelia, "King Lear;" Desdemona, "Othello;" Esther Eccles, "Caste;" Grace Harkaway, "London Assurance;" Lady

Florence, "Rosedale;" Little Em'ly, "David Copperfield;" Olivia, "Twelfth Night;" Pauline, "Lady of Lyons;" Queen Elizabeth, "Mary Stuart;" Ursula, "Much Ado;" Winnifred Wood, "Jack Sheppard."

It was during the season of 1878, Miss Rehan's last with the Albaugh company, that Augustin Daly first saw her. His attention was again called to her in April, 1879, while she was playing Mary Standish in "Pique" with Fanny Davenport at the Grand Opera House, New York. She was engaged by Mr. Daly and first appeared under his management at the Olympic Theatre, New York, as Big Clemence in Daly's version of "L'Assommoir." The story, which may or may not be true, so uncertain are theatrical anecdotes, connected with this engagement is as follows: Maude Granger and Emily Rigl played two leading parts in "L'Assommoir." There was a scene in the play where they threw pails of water at each other.

The two actresses were great rivals theatrically, and it is said that they spitefully threw the water in each other's faces instead of on their skirts, underneath which were worn rubber petticoats. Of course both denied it, yet the circumstance was used to work up some advertising, and the young men about town would take in that one scene every evening to see the "fight" between the pretty washerwomen of "L'Assommoir." Finally Miss Rigl suddenly withdrew from the company. It was during hot summer weather, and Mr. Daly, not caring to increase his expenses, looked through the company to take out one of the female supernumeraries to fill Miss Rigl's place for the short time the piece was to run. The part was called Big Clemence. Now it so happened that Ada Rehan was playing a part of a few lines. She was tall and would look the part of Big Clemence; so she had it given over to her keeping.

On September 17, 1879, Augustin Daly opened his theatre on the present site, formerly Wood's Museum, and Miss Rehan became the leading woman, appearing for the first time as Nellie Beers in "Love's Young Dream," which was played with Olive Logan's play, "Newport," as an opening bill. Two weeks later "Divorce" was revived, and Miss Rehan appeared in the rôle created by Fanny Davenport six years before, Lu Ten Eyck.

It is only necessary to glance at the parts that Miss Rehan acted during her years as the foremost member of Mr. Daly's famous company to understand what is meant by a thorough artistic training and to realise that the actress's unique versatility has been honestly acquired. Among her impersonations have been Valentine Osprey in "The Railroad of Love," Jo in "The Lottery of Love," Xantippe in "The Wife of Socrates," Tilburnia in "Rehearsing a Tragedy,"

Phronie in "Dollars and Sense," Oriana in "The Inconstant," Kate Verity in "The Squire," Doris in "An International Match," Katharine in "The Taming of the Shrew," Audrey Ollyphant in "Samson and Delilah," Niobe in "A Night Off," Flos in "7-20-8," Tryphena Magillicuddy in "The Golden Widow," Etna in "The Great Unknown," Rosalind in "As You Like It," Donna Hypolita in "She Would and She Wouldn't," Peggy in "The Country Girl," Dina Faudelle in "A Priceless Paragon," Mlle. Rose in "The Prayer," Helena in "A Midsummer Night's Dream," Miss Hoyden in "Miss Hoyden's Husband," Nancy Brasher in "Nancy & Co.," Elvira Honiton in "New Lamps for Old," Baroness Vera von Bouraneff in "The Last Word," Lady Teazle in "The School for Scandal," Pierrot in "The Prodigal Son," the Princess of France in "Love's Labour Lost," Aprilla Dymond in "Love in Tandem," Maid Marian in "The

Foresters," Rena Primrose in "Little Miss Million," Juno Jessamine in "A Test Case," Julia in "The Hunchback," Mockwood in "The Knave," Letitia Hardy in "The Belle's Stratagem," Viola in "Twelfth Night," and last season Roxane in Daly's adaptation of Rostand's "Cyrano de Bergerac" and the London jeweller's wife in the English melodrama, "The Great Ruby."

Miss Rehan first played in London in 1884, opening at Toole's Theatre on July 19th, in "7-20-8, or The Casting of the Boomerang," the production of which was received with much adverse comment. Since that time her visits abroad have been many, and the Daly company may be said to have been almost as much at home in England as here. The second London engagement in 1886 of nine weeks at the Strand Theatre was much more successful than the first, Miss Rehan attracting considerable attention by her work in a small part in "A Night

Off," and afterward by her acting in "Nancy & Co." After playing in London, the company toured the English provinces and then played in Germany and in Paris, which received the American actors with great coolness, due as much as anything to the fact that the Frenchmen could not, and, indeed, did not care, to understand the foreign players.

In 1888, at the Gaiety Theatre, Miss Rehan first showed the Londoners her most brilliant Shakespearian character, Katharine in "The Taming of the Shrew," and forthwith the London theatre-goers accorded her the fullest recognition and the heartiest support. This splendid impression was heightened when she occupied Henry Irving's Lyceum Theatre during the summer of 1890, presenting "The Daughter of Comedy" and her delightful impersonation of Rosalind in "As You Like It." The London critics, one and all, enthusiastically

praised this beautiful performance. In September, 1891, Miss Rehan was again in London, and two years later Mr. Daly realised his ambition to become a London manager. Daly's Theatre was opened June 27, 1893, with Miss Rehan as Katharine. During her tours of England Miss Rehan has played in Dublin, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and in the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon. In 1894 she became a star, supported by Mr. Daly's company, although the change was merely a formal announcement of a fact that had long been accepted by the public.

Ada Rehan is a superb comedy actress, equally at home as the hoydenish, mutinous, and mischievous Peggy Thrift in "The Country Girl," as the delicately humorous and quietly pathetic Viola in "Twelfth Night," as the vivacious and womanly Lady Teazle in "The School for Scandal," and in the many light comedy rôles in the adapta-

tions from the German that were such prominent features of the Daly repertory in the eighties. Gifted with a voice of rare musical charm, a stage presence that is both gracious and dignified, a radiant individuality, and a fine sense of humour, she is especially successful in characters that mingle fun with sentiment and require buoyancy of spirits without coarseness. She has uncommon eloquence in the expression of woe, and she often deeply moves her audiences with the wealth of her emotion. Her pathos is simple and true and is conveyed with artistic subtilty. Her tragic powers have not been tested of late years, though it is by no means certain that tragedy is beyond her range.

CHAPTER XI.

VIRGINIA HARNED.

VIRGINIA HARNED was the creator in this country of the character of Drusilla Ives in Henry Arthur Jones's sensational comedy, "The Dancing Girl;" she was also the original Trilby in Paul Potter's dramatisation of George Du Maurier's novel, which was produced in Boston in 1895; and she created the rôle of Lady Ursula in Anthony Hope's romantic comedy, "The Adventure of Lady Ursula," when that drama was originally acted at the Broad Street Theatre, Philadelphia, on December 6, 1897. These are her three best parts, and their wide variance shows conclusively her versatility as a comedy actress. Physically,

Miss Harned, who, as is well known, is not Miss Harned at all, but Mrs. E. H. Sothern, the wife of the popular star, is a buxom young woman, whose bracing and frank personality carries with it exuberance of spirits, life, freedom, and happiness. Her dramatic temperament is sumptuous, warm, and full of colour, suggesting voluptuous ease, love of pleasure, and a fondness for luxurious refinement. There is nothing spirituelle about her; her stage presence is distinctly material and very much of the world; she seems a woman with a streak of Bohemia in her make-up, whose heart is as true as steel and whose sympathy is easily aroused and bountifully expended.

Such a personality and temperament fitted admirably the personality and temperament of Drusilla Ives, the wilful daughter of Quaker parents, whose craving for gaiety and for the bustle of worldliness drew her from the safe confines of her quiet home

into an environment of sin and wickedness. Her whirlwind of pleasure soon brought sorrow, shame, and despair. It was a common enough story, of course. But it is the common enough stories that keep a permanent hold on human interest. Drusilla Ives was practically the star part of the play, through which Miss Harned moved with sensuous charm, an insinuating smile, an enticing voice, and a fascinating grace, thoroughly characteristic; for Drusilla was sensuous in look and act; she had all the fascinations of a beautiful woman who was purposely a temptress and who delighted in being a temptress. Some one called Drusilla brazen. If he meant that she was brazen as Miss Harned portrayed her, I cannot agree with him. There was an undercurrent of sorrow in the impersonation, a touch of regret and of conscience-stricken remorse, sentiments unconsciously conveyed by the actress, perhaps, that always strongly im-

pressed upon me the pathos of Drusilla Ives's experience. Miss Harned's conception did not suggest to me a woman totally depraved. The actress constantly reminded one that Drusilla was, after all, only a girl, country-bred and ignorant or unappreciative of the consequences of evil, whose recklessness was at first but another name for the unenlightened innocence of a person naturally pleasure-loving and impatient of restraint.

Miss Harned's Trilby was probably a more artistic performance than her Drusilla Ives; it was more of an impersonation, for, if we except the Bohemian quirk in her temperament, Miss Harned did not in the least suggest the statuesque Trilby. Du Maurier described his heroine with the greatest care. "She was one of the tallest of her sex," he wrote, and again, "Not a giantess by any means. She was as tall as Miss Ellen Terry, and that is a charming height, I think." Now, Miss Harned could not reach that height by

several inches, but she had the advantage of suggesting physical perfection, which from the viewpoint of the stage, where a few inches more or less do not count for much, was of greater importance. However, it was a sympathetic spirit with which she regarded Trilby, and the fine art by means of which she gave life to her conception, that won for her a great success and fixed the pattern that the many later Trilbys were compelled to follow.

"I do not think Trilby was a bad girl," Miss Harned answered, when asked her opinion of the character. "How can a woman who has never associated with pure women know that she is not good? I am not upholding the sort of life that Trilby led before she made friends with the trio, only saying that she really had not stopped to think; no one had made her, so why should she be blamed? It was all so different to her afterward. Surely, one must be

very narrow-minded to think that Trilby was a bad girl."

Lady Ursula was a rôle entirely different from either Drusilla Ives or Trilby. It was a fanciful character, full of obstinate femininity and replete with the charm of fun-loving girlhood. There was later a delicious touch of sentiment, when the woman, proud and independent, surrendered herself to the man she loved. Miss Harned's acting was dainty and full of spirit. The comedy in the duel scene was well conveyed, though here and there one became conscious of a touch of artificiality that somewhat marred the picture. This fault was hardly prominent enough, however, seriously to affect the general excellence of the personation.

Virginia Harned first saw the light of day in Boston, but her parents left that city when she was a baby, and she does not know even the name of the street on which she was born. Previous to going on the stage she

lived abroad for many years, in England and on the Continent. Her early theatrical experiences were with road companies, her first engagement having been with a company playing Robson and Crane's old success, "Our Boarding House." In the spring of 1887 she was the leading lady with George Clarke of the Daly Company, when he toured New England for a few weeks in "The Corsican Brothers" and "False Shame." The experiment ended in financial disaster. For two years she acted, throughout the South and West, Liobe in "A Night Off," the part that Ada Rehan made famous. Then she started out with Harry Lacy in "The Still Alarm," but became involved in a legal controversy with the management before the season was ended. Her first New York engagement followed in Sedley Brown's "A Long Lane," at the Fourteenth Street Theatre, after which she joined Louis Aldrich's company, playing the

comedy part of Florence Fetherley in "The Editor." While she was with Mr. Aldrich Daniel Frohman saw her act and engaged her as E. H. Sothern's leading lady. Her first character with Mr. Sothern was Clara Dexter in "The Maister of Woodbarrow."

"You have no idea," said Miss Harned, recalling that time, "what a slip of a girl I was then, and so thin and unimportant looking. I had broad enough shoulders and a full neck and chest, but otherwise my dresses were full of pads to give my figure some sort of maturity and weight. I came across one of the dresses I wore that season, when looking over a trunk the other day, and I was amazed at it. Why, even when I first played with Mr. Sothern in 'The Maister of Woodbarrow' my gowns were all padded."

During her first connection with Mr. Sothern Miss Harned appeared in "Lord Chumley," "The Dancing Girl," and as Fanny in "Captain Lettarblair." Leaving

Daniel Frohman's management, she joined A. M. Palmer's stock company, scoring her first success as Mrs. Erlynne in "Lady Windermere's Fan," and afterward acting such rôles as Letty Fletcher in "Saints and Sinners," and Mrs. Sylvester in "The New Woman." Her creation of Trilby followed, after which she rejoined Mr. Sothern, with whom she has acted off and on ever since, appearing in "Lady Ursula," "The Lady of Lyons," and "A Colonial Girl," when that play was produced in Philadelphia in August, 1898, under the name of "A Shilling's Worth."

CHAPTER XII.

VIOLA ALLEN.

VIOLA ALLEN has been a star just one season, and she is accounted one of the most fortunate actresses before the public. The play in which she appeared last season, — Hall Caine's dramatisation of his own novel "The Christian," — while far from being high art, strongly appealed to the popular fancy, and the result was big houses and great financial prosperity. The best summing up of "The Christian" that I ever heard was made by Henry Jewett, who played John Storm during the run of the drama in Boston. "There's lots of buncombe in it," he said, "lots of buncombe."

"The Christian" was produced in Albany, N. Y., August 23, 1898, and after a preliminary tour it opened in New York on October 10th, remaining there until March 5th, when it was taken to Boston, where it ran out the season. It is a strictly theatrical play, and its characters are largely of machine make. It chiefly appeals to persons on whom the theatre-going habit is not permanently fixed, and who, therefore, are not analysers, consciously or unconsciously, of dramatic effects. The sentiments in the speeches of John Storm, speeches that are uttered by the actor with all the solemnity of complete conviction, strike the unsophisticated with peculiar force, and these hifalutin words and preachy conventionalities, together with a certain dramatic power that is the only reason for the existence of the mechanical drama, account easily enough for the popular success of the play. If one tears away this cant and insincerity, he finds that

the core of the play is the love of John Storm for Glory Quayle, the one a visionary ascetic, almost a fanatic, with a great desire to help the poor and downtrodden, and with a greater desire to wed the beautiful Manx girl, lovely in character, pure-minded, talented, ambitious, but absolutely without the martyr spirit that is so essential a part of Storm's self-centred nature. Storm, intensely earnest, immensely sympathetic with the mob, is still curiously selfish, besides being absolutely wanting in power of self-analysis. Without knowing it, he is a thorough pessimist. The author's problem is to unite Glory, the actress, the light-hearted, fun-loving girl, and the honest, true-hearted woman, and Storm, the uncompromising, to make one the optimist and the pessimist, a problem that apparently has no logical solution, — at least, none so far as Mr. Caine is concerned. His way of doing it is to wrench Glory from her world, and

throw her into Storm's arms, and this is what they call a happy ending.

Miss Allen's acting was far better than the play. She is personally a woman of much charm, and professionally an actress of well-rounded art. While she has no great spontaneity of method, nor a temperament whose dramatic qualities especially impress one, she has fine tact, much intelligence, and emotional gifts of no mean order. Her versatility is adequate, though by no means extraordinary, and her comedy — especially in situations that call for vivacity and girlish gaiety — is less apt to ring true than her acting in moments that require the portrayal of quiet and deep emotion. This, of course, is but another way of saying that she does not laugh well, for the secret of success in girlish characters of the light comedy order is a joyous laugh that sounds perfectly natural.

Viola Allen comes of a theatrical family.

Her father is C. Leslie Allen, an accomplished character actor, who first appeared on the stage in 1852 in the Howard Athenæum in Boston, and a short time after in the old Boston Theatre on Federal Street. He spoke the last words uttered to an audience in the latter house before it was burned. Mr. Allen acted in many of the old-time stock companies, playing especially well such parts as Uriah Heep in "David Copperfield," Malvolio in "Twelfth Night," Saunders in "The Man o' Airlie," Bardolph in "The Merry Wives of Windsor," in which he supported James H. Hackett, the famous Falstaff; Moneypenny in "The Long Strike," and Old Rodgers in "Esmeralda." Miss Allen's mother was also on the stage. She was born in England and came to this country at an early age. The first character that she ever acted was the Player Queen in "Hamlet." She was married to Mr. Allen in 1862, and for many years they were

together in the same companies. Mrs. Allen's speciality was "old woman" parts.

Miss Allen was born in the late sixties in Alabama, where her parents were playing, but she spent nearly all her childhood in Boston, where she attended school, and, indeed, lived and grew up in much the same way as does the average girl, for her father and mother, who were connected with the Boston Theatre company during that time, were able to maintain a home, that rarest of an actor's blessings. When she was thirteen or fourteen years old, her parents obtained engagements in New York, and the family moved to that city, where Miss Allen continued in school. Her début on the stage came about unexpectedly when she was about fifteen years old. Her father was playing in the Madison Square Theatre Company in support of Annie Russell, who was making a great success in New York in "Esmeralda." Miss Russell retired from

the cast, and the question came, who should take her place. Miss Allen had never even seen a dozen plays in her life, much less acted in any; but she had the instinct, and when the chance was given her to succeed Miss Russell, she jumped at the opportunity. As is often the case, in spite of her ignorance of the stage and lack of time in which to study the character, she made a success.

"Where did you get your dramatic training?" Miss Allen was once asked.

"I can't tell you," she replied. "I have naturally enough been interested in dramatic matters ever since I can remember, and I have read and studied Shakespeare since I could read at all, always, of course, under the guidance of my father. But all the training of practical value that I have had I got upon the stage."

After a season on the road with "Esmeralda," Miss Allen became leading lady for John McCullough for the season that proved

to be the actor's last. With him she acted Virginia, in which she has been described as "the sweetest, almost, that ever was seen — so winning, so young, so fragile-looking;" Desdemona, an impersonation that has clung to the memories of those that saw it; Parthenia; and Julia in "The Gladiator," Doctor Bird's version, a totally different play from the one of the same name presented by Salvini. In those days a writer characterised Miss Allen thus: "As dainty as she is young and as promising as she is natural." After her engagement with McCullough she joined Lawrence Barrett for the production of Browning's "Blot on the 'Scutcheon," and the next season she supported the elder Salvini, with whom she assumed such rôles as Cordelia in "King Lear," Desdemona in "Othello," Neodamia in the Salvini version of "The Gladiator," and the wife's part in "Le Mort Civile." On the off nights, when Alexander Salvini played, she was Juliet to his

Romeo. Miss Allen was asked if she found it difficult to follow Salvini in English while he spoke in Italian. "Oh, not at all," she replied. "He was so wonderfully eloquent of face and gesture, I could always tell the meaning of what he was saying even though I could not understand a word."

Miss Allen's death scenes were much admired, and regarding them she once expressed herself as follows:

"I have endured many deaths. One of them was in 'Virginius,' when I was stabbed and fell backward to the ground. When I played in 'Othello' with Salvini, I was always nervous during the smothering scene, because he used to get so excited. I turned my face sideways and held a small place open under the further side of the pillow, so that I could breathe, but even that breathing hole would frequently get closed up under the forceful energy of Salvini. Then, when he finds that he has killed Desdemona without cause, in

his remorse he throws himself heavily on the body. I used to wait for this piece of business with fear and trembling. Salvini's fall was awfully realistic. As Juliet I have died many times. You know Romeo drinks the poison and subsequently throws the vial away as I approach him. (This is in the Garrick version.) Then, seeing him die, I stab myself and fall over him. One night some practical joker thought it would be funny to fill the vial with ink, and as Romeo merely made a slight motion of drinking he did not notice the fluid, but when he threw the bottle from him it struck somewhere near me, and the ink flew all over my face and lovely white dress. On that occasion you may be sure that I ended my life with the least possible delay. In 'La Charbonnière' I died a slow death by poison, and I took special care to find out the right poison that should be mentioned in the piece as the one which would cause a slow numbing of

the senses. As Jess in 'Hoodman Blind' I died of starvation, and lay on my side well down the stage. This was often an awkward situation on account of the different curtains at the various theatres. Sometimes, to avoid my being struck by the curtain, the hero would be obliged to drag my body back, and once, though a man put out his hand to keep the roller away from me, the heavy mass actually grazed my nose."

After leaving Salvini, Miss Allen was associated with a number of travelling companies, and she also starred for a brief and unsuccessful season. Then she joined Frederic de Belleville, and both were featured in melodrama, after which, in 1888, she was engaged as leading lady of the Boston Museum stock company. While with the Museum company she played Evelyn Brookfield in the English melodrama, "The Bells of Haslemere," which had a long run in Boston, and she created in America the part of

Mrs. Errol in "Little Lord Fauntleroy," in which Elsie Leslie was the Fauntleroy. This was, perhaps, the greatest success the Museum ever had. She also created the leading feminine rôle in Bronson Howard's "Shenandoah," when that drama was produced at the Museum, and she was the first Fanny on this side of the water in Robert Buchanan's "Joseph's Sweetheart." She appeared as Minnie in Pinero's "Sweet Lavender," in "Hazel Kirke" at her own benefit, and acted Violet Melrose and Clara Douglass in the old comedies, "Our Boys" and "Money." Miss Allen made a fine impression at the Boston Museum, although the engagement by no means showed her at her best, for it did not present her in parts that were especially suited to her, or that made any great demands on her abilities.

In the fall of 1889 she became a member of the Joseph Jefferson–William Florence

Company, playing Lydia Languish to Jefferson's Bob Acres and Florence's Sir Lucius O'Trigger in "The Rivals," and Cicely Homespun to Jefferson's Doctor Pangloss and Florence's Zeke Homespun in "The Heir-at-Law." In 1893 she joined the Empire Theatre Company of New York as leading lady, which position she left to star in "The Christian." Her first appearance with the Empire Company was in Bronson Howard's unfortunate "Aristocracy," and she was later identified with such successes as "Liberty Hall," "The Masqueraders," and "Sowing the Wind." Her last appearance with this company was as Yvonne in "The Conquerors."

CHAPTER XIII.

CORONA RICCARDO.

In November, 1898, Robert Mantell came to Boston for his annual engagement. Mr. Mantell had been coming to Boston in similar fashion for years; for years, also, as the dramatic editor viewed the case, he had opened his week's stay with the grotesquely old-fashioned play, "Monbars." Surely nothing new could come from "Monbars," and so the office boy got the Mantell tickets. Now, the office boy was not a great dramatic critic, but he did know a good thing when he saw it. Consequently, the following morning there were loud proclamations around the newspaper office to the effect that Mantell had a young woman in his

company, who, as the office boy expressed it, was "great." The dramatic editor, at that time, did not appreciate the value of the office boy's notions of acting. But the constant dropping of water will wear away a stone, and similarly the office boy's constantly reiterated praise made its impression on the dramatic editor. So when "Romeo and Juliet" was played at the Wednesday matinee, he sent his faithful and long-suffering assistant to see if this girl, who had so captivated the office boy, was really good for anything.

The faithful and long-suffering assistant received the commission with misgiving, and fulfilled it with reluctance. Before the first act of Shakespeare's tragedy had ended, however, he, like the office boy, was brought to a state of unabashed adoration. He returned to the office, primed to write a column, but the dramatic editor said "Bosh!" and then secretly resolved to see this marvel for him-

self. That is how he became acquainted with Corona Riccardo's Desdemona. The experience was a surprising one. He expected to be bored; he did not intend to stay through more than two acts under any circumstances. What a fall was there! He found himself intensely interested in a Desdemona whose youth, beauty, and exquisite feminine charm stirred his very soul, the music of whose voice was like a soft, soothing melody in his ears, and whose gentle pathos and pitiful suffering greatly aroused his sympathy, and moved him to a degree almost embarrassing.

At present but twenty years old, the daughter of Roman parents, though born in Naples, Corona Riccardo possesses to the highest degree the colourful dramatic temperament that is the Italian's birthright. She realises with a wealth of physical perfection the ideal type of Southern womanly beauty. Her hair is black as the raven's wing, fram-

ing a face of wonderful plasticity, a mirror of the emotions, from which shine eyes whose midnight depths at one moment seem fathomless wells of melting tenderness, and at another unquenchable volcanoes of blazing wrath, eyes that the love-light makes surpassingly feminine, which anger and rage make terrible. In figure she is tall and stately, and she moves with a gliding grace that is natural and unstudied. Her voice is a choice instrument, rich, deep, and full, and her speech betrays the faintest hint of a foreign accent, which, without in the least marring her pronunciation of English words, gives an added charm of liquid softness to her enunciation.

Miss Riccardo is, I believe, the most promising actress on the American stage. Even now, with a stage experience of less than five years, her exceptional physical endowment, her splendid intelligence, and her fine art, even in its present incompletely

developed state, give her rank with the best. And she has her whole life before her!

Corona Riccardo lost her parents when she was very young, and her entire girlhood was spent in convents in southern France and in this country. Her earliest ambition was to sing, and for a time she studied for grand opera. But she grew restive under this drudgery, and turned her attention to the stage. Her first appearance was in New York, in the fall of 1894, at a matinee performance in the Empire Theatre by Nelson Wheatcroft's pupils. Miss Riccardo took the part of a Mexican girl and acted it so capably that the New York critics, who watch these show performances rather closely, gave her a very complimentary send-off. Shortly after this she was engaged by Wilson Barrett, who was at that time touring the United States, and she made her professional début as Ancaria in "The Sign of the Cross." Later she was

promoted to the rôle of the patrician, Berenice, which she played with Mr. Barrett, in London. Regarding her performance of this character, Clement Scott wrote:

"Miss Corona Riccardo appears as Berenice, the seductive Roman girl. This young actress has, if I am not mistaken, a future. She is strikingly handsome, and so looks the part to perfection. But she does more, she plays it with a passionate energy and voluptuous grace that stamp her as being possessed of great talent. At present, hers is untrained power, but for all that it is very fascinating and exceptionally good. Italian by birth, Miss Riccardo only gives evidence of her nationality — as far as voice is concerned — in the passionate outburst of jealousy to which Berenice gives vent."

After closing with Mr. Barrett, Miss Riccardo was obliged to retire from active work for a year, on account of ill health. She became Mr. Mantell's chief support in the

fall of 1898, and with him she acted six characters, Juliet in "Romeo and Juliet," Desdemona in "Othello," Ophelia in "Hamlet," Diane in "Monbars," Lucille in "A Face in the Moonlight," and Marguerite in "A Secret Warrant." Just before Augustin Daly left for Europe — only a few weeks previous to his death in Paris — Miss Riccardo was engaged for his company, and the day that the ship sailed she appeared for the first time as the Countess Mirtza in "The Great Ruby," which character she played until the theatre was closed after Mr. Daly's death. It was considered by members of the company a noteworthy incident that Mr. Daly, after a single rehearsal, should be so satisfied with Miss Riccardo as to leave for Europe without waiting for her public performance. The *Dramatic Mirror* said that she impersonated the Countess with more skill and more power than her predecessors, and added: "Her accession to Mr. Daly's

CHAPTER XIV.

MARY MANNERING.

MARY MANNERING is an English girl, who came to this country a little over two years ago, to play leading parts in Daniel Frohman's Lyceum Theatre Company. No sooner did she get here than she fell in love with an American actor, James K. Hackett, who was then leading man of the Lyceum Company. In May, 1897, the two were secretly married, and so closely was this interesting fact guarded that the public never learned of it until the couple themselves announced it the following January, after Mr. Hackett had recovered from a serious attack of typhoid fever, through which he was nursed by the winsome actress. Miss Mannering, who is

though the play will, of course, be the work of a modern author, and will not be written in blank verse."

"My only wish and desire," she continued, "is to play the parts I love best, and play them before I am old, while I can yet look and understand and feel them without having to think backward, and remember how I did act and feel when I was the age of the character I would portray. I do not want to wait till I am old."

not yet twenty-five years old, had been acting, principally in the English provinces, about seven years, when Mr. Frohman discovered her. He journeyed from London to see a play called "The Late Mr. Costello," which he thought he might want for his New York theatre. He bought the play, which, later, proved a failure, and he also engaged Miss Mannering, who was playing one of the characters in it.

In England, Miss Mannering was known on the stage as Florence Friend. She made her début with Mrs. James Brown Potter and Kyrle Bellew, in "Hero and Leander," and her first part called for the speaking of just three lines. She then came under the tutorship of Herman Vezin, an American and an actor of considerable versatility and extraordinary energy, and during her connection with him she became well known and extremely popular in the English provinces, though London, the goal of the British

actor's ambition, knew little or nothing of her. Speaking of Mr. Vezin, Miss Mannering said:

"I am very grateful to Mr. Vezin, and have great admiration for him. He was one of the best actors of Shakespearian drama I think I ever saw. When I was with him I appeared in a number of Shakespeare's plays, and I was but eighteen when I acted the Queen in 'Hamlet,' while Mr. Vezin, then more than sixty years old, was the Dane. Fancy a Hamlet of sixty interviewing his mother of eighteen!

"I do not care much for the part of Rose Trelawney," Miss Mannering continued, referring to her last season's success. "Perhaps it is because I have a craving to play more emotional parts. I am anxious to act Camille. Indeed, I have longed to try Dumas's famous heroine ever since I went on the stage. I should like to star as Marguerite Gauthier, and then, if I were success-

ful, I should want to add a number of Shakespeare's characters to my repertory."

Miss Mannering's first appearance with the Lyceum Company was made in "The Courtship of Leonie," a play that proved a failure. Miss Mannering, however, by means of her winning personality and gentle womanliness, won the affections of the Lyceum patrons, and she has retained them ever since. Her personal success was continued in "The First Gentleman of Europe," in which she played Daphne, and in "The Mayflower," though neither drama won any great favour. Then came her triumph as Fay Zuliani in "The Princess and the Butterfly," which was followed last year by her beautiful impersonation of Rose Trelawney in "Trelawney of the Wells."

Among all the actors who have such important places in Mr. Pinero's fascinating comedy, Rose is the only one that is without eccentricities and amusing absurdities of

thought, speech, and action. Not a character of any great positiveness, — though as the play progresses it continually increases in emotional power, — the rôle requires, above all things, simplicity and sincerity, and these Miss Mannering conveys with rare charm. Moreover, her outburst of righteous indignation, when she leaves the Gower mansion at the end of the second act, and the pathos of her position in the theatre, — an actress whose experiences in real life had made her incapable of ever again successfully presenting the stilted heroines of the artificial drama then in vogue, — so delicately indicated in the third act, both evidence a dramatic force that the character makes little demand upon.

JULIA ARTHUR
As Mercedes in "Mercedes"

I do not believe, for instance, that she will ever play straight comedy with any great distinction, though I do not deny that she may learn to play it with authority. Miss Arthur, however, has still to reach her full artistic stature, and the tragic depths of her temperament have only partially been revealed. Unmistakably an actress of promise, she is, moreover, one of the three or four persons in this country who are actually — and at some personal sacrifice, too — accomplishing something for the drama as an art.

What is the most remarkable characteristic of Julia Arthur's acting? Emphatically it is her power to burn into the memory of the person that sees her in any rôle whatsoever an impression that never wholly fades away. This is a most exceptional gift, for no artistic endeavour is so ephemeral as the actor's. He creates for the passing moment only. He is a sculptor carving imaginary statues. He may have genius, strengthened

by years of observation and study, yet all he can expect is to live a little while in the memories of those that have themselves seen him. The most appreciative of critics cannot help him, for the essence of the art of acting, the great personal equation that, after all, is the backbone of a stage impersonation, cannot be conveyed in words.

Less than ten years ago, when a member of A. M. Palmer's Madison Square Theatre Company, Julia Arthur first demonstrated that she had exceptional talent. At that time she revealed a power, the full possibilities of which she has not yet realised. The play was "Lady Windermere's Fan," an exotic, in which, nevertheless, Miss Arthur made plain the tragic element that is so much a distinguishing trait of her dramatic personality, and which has been since more deeply felt in her "Mercedes." She was scarcely more than a girl in those days, a brunette of

the most pronounced type, a face Madonna-like, with eyes coal black and limpid, soft and caressing in moments of tenderness, welling full of tears in moments of sorrow, flashing, burning, scornful in moments of passion, wonderful eyes of abiding fascination, approaching those of Edwin Booth in their powers of expression.

Within this girl there stormed and raved a turgid temperament, which she had not learned to control. She was in the same predicament as an untaught singer, whose great voice threatens to tear his throat to tatters. Miss Arthur's temperament was not refined nor subtle; it dwelt among the basal elements of human nature, among the passions of primitive mankind, the fierce passions of unreasoning hate and unreasoning love. Such was the Julia Arthur of the early days, and such, essentially, is the Julia Arthur of to-day, for hers is not a temperament to change materially, grow and develop

however much it may. She is a woman of magnificent depth of feeling, of great emotional force, but a woman in whom feminine charm, as a dramatic value, is quite non-existent.

Julia Arthur was born in Hamilton, Ontario, May 3, 1869, and her stage life began fourteen years later, when she became a member of the company of Daniel E. Bandmann, an eccentric German tragedian, who probably played Shakespeare in more outlandish places than any actor that ever lived. After three years with Bandmann, and a visit abroad, she played in stock companies in San Francisco, Savannah, and Halifax, Nova Scotia. Then followed a year with "The Still Alarm," and another year with a Canadian company. In August, 1891, she appeared at the Union Square Theatre, New York, in "The Black Mask." In November she joined A. M. Palmer's company, playing Jeanne in "The Broken Seal." The sum-

mer of 1892 was spent with the Jacob Litt's Company in Minneapolis and St. Paul.

Returning to Mr. Palmer's company in the fall, she created in America the part of Lady Windermere, which was followed by her greatest success in Thomas Bailey Aldrich's adaptation from the Spanish, "Mercedes." After leaving the Palmer company Miss Arthur joined Henry Irving's forces in England, creating Rosamond in Tennyson's "Becket," and later appearing with Mr. Irving during his American tour.

In October, 1897, Miss Arthur started out as a star in "A Lady of Quality," by Stephen Townsend and Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett. Her season was interrupted during her Boston engagement by illness, and at this time, also, her marriage to Benjamin P. Cheney, of Boston, was announced. This alliance put abundant means at Miss Arthur's disposal, which she has utilised in elaborate productions of Shakespearian and

classic dramas. Miss Arthur's rôles of last season were Clorinda Wildairs in "A Lady of Quality," Parthenia in "Ingomar," Rosalind in "As You Like It," Galatea in "Pygmalion and Galatea," Juliet in "Romeo and Juliet," and Mercedes.

"Mercedes" is a sordid tale of love, jealousy, and revenge, and in it Miss Arthur finds as she has found in no other play, opportunities to reveal in all their brutality the animal passions of a woman unrestrained by even the conception of refinement. Such a woman fits perfectly into the Arthur temperament, and the characterisation is wonderfully complete.

"A Lady of Quality" is a poor play, which last season met its just fate in England, where it failed completely. In this country it had considerable vogue, which, it is but fair to say, was entirely due to Miss Arthur's art. At least, her art was sufficient to conceal from the public the

crudity of the Burnett-Townsend product. Miss Arthur, however, was not led astray by the popular approval of "A Lady of Quality." She soon realised what a wretched work of art it was, and she was ready to break away from it long before those interested with her financially were willing that she should.

The character of Clorinda Wildairs, apart from the play, was not an uninteresting one. Here was a girl of fearless, passionate disposition, a girl, motherless, who fought her way into womanhood side by side with roistering men, and through it all — here is the inconsistency of the character — remained so innocent that she succumbed to the wiles of the first man that assailed her virtue. Proudly independent, she looked the world, man-like, face to face. With superb courage she brought her deceiver grovelling to her feet. When he refused longer to grovel she killed him.

It will readily be seen that there were phases in the character particularly suited to Miss Arthur. But the character was by no means artistically developed in the play, for one saw no growth, only results. Consequently the great blemish in Miss Arthur's acting seemed especially prominent in this characterisation. As Clorinda, Miss Arthur had great moments, but these moments were rarely reached by a crescendo of passion; she seemed to leap into them; they were like lightning flashes, startling in their intensity and brilliancy, convincing because of the inherent dramatic force behind them, but unsatisfying because of the inartistic way in which they were broached. Matters on the stage seemed to be moving along in a mildly interesting fashion, when unexpectedly, without warning, came one of those Arthur flashes that set the nerves to tingling. Miss Arthur had dramatic power in abundance at such times. She under-

stood and was able to impress forcibly the elementals in human nature; she sounded with positiveness the simpler tragic notes, scorn and hatred. Despair, as an element, did not entirely escape her, but, strangely enough, she did not seem to be able to depict a woman's despair.

After Miss Arthur made up her mind to try herself in Shakespearian rôles, she naturally enough first essayed Rosalind in "As You Like It." Her Rosalind proved to be a strikingly original conception, abounding in a peculiarly sardonic humour and lacking in pure poetic sentiment. It has been extravagantly praised — some comparing it to the Rosalind of Adelaide Neilson — and it has been extravagantly blamed. Perhaps as fair an estimate of her impersonation as any was that of Henry Austin Clapp, who said:

"The most striking peculiarity of Miss Arthur's Rosalind is its avoidance of nearly

every manifestation of mirthful ebulliency and effusion. She laughs seldom, — almost not at all, indeed, — and in this defies the best held theories of the part. Shakespeare's heroine is essentially refined, but she is robust of temperament and a hearty, persistent lover and practiser of frolic. For this well-established scheme Miss Arthur substitutes her own, with a perfectly definite effect upon the spectator and auditor. Her Rosalind is sweet and gentle emotionally; intellectually, she is distinguished, shrewd, and, above all things, piquant. A fine archness, a distinct reserve, a temperamental coolness, a great gift in insinuation instead of a splendid frankness of statement, are combined with effect."

There is a tradition that Juliet was one of Miss Arthur's earlier impersonations. Certain it is that her Juliet seems in all particulars a mature conception. There are many moments of great beauty in her reading.

The last half of the drama she plays with increasing dramatic force that culminates in a death scene of touching delicacy and pathetic import, a death so free from horror that it is difficult to realise how full of horror and raving it might be. She also has moments of quiet intensity and moments of sincere emotion that force home powerfully the cruel fate that is bearing so remorselessly on the lovely Veronese.

However, Miss Arthur, with all her marvellous beauty, with all her natural equipment of passionate power, is not an inspired Juliet. Her grasp on the poetry of the rôle is weak, and her limitation of temperament or narrowness of conception permit her to fill only here and there the full measure of Juliet's character. Unfortunately, she never displays any great sustained emotion nor strikes even ever so faintly the note of tragic genius. Following tradition closely at all times, she too often allows her act-

ing to become monotonous and without colour.

In the balcony scene she was surprisingly effective. It was acted without a touch of coquetry and with none of the maidenly modesty that speaks and retracts and speaks again. Juliet was made a woman telling frankly, passionately of her love, and planning deliberately and without shame her clandestine marriage. The meeting with Romeo in Friar Laurence's cell was another fine moment, and there was much pathos in her acting of the quarrel scene between father and daughter. The casting aside of the nurse, when she advised the marriage with Paris, was also well conceived. The potion scene passed quietly, with a commendable absence of heroics and without ranting. Indeed, Miss Arthur was always artistic in the matter of suppression, and she never tore a passion to tatters.

CHAPTER XVI.

MAY IRWIN.

MAY IRWIN is a personality rather than an artist, an entertainer more than an actress. Her career has vacillated between the variety stage and the legitimate, until at last she has become identified with that hybrid species of the theatrical amusement called farce-comedy. Miss Irwin is a famous fun-maker; of jolly, rotund figure, and with a face that reflects the gaiety of nations, she is the personification of humour and careless mirth, a female Falstaff, as it were, whose sixteenth century grossness and ribaldry has been refined and recast in a nineteenth century mould. The old saying, "Laugh and the world laughs with you," fits her perfectly,

for no one apparently gets any more enjoyment from her jests than does she herself. Her good nature is infinite and her buoyancy of spirits irrepressible. Her good-fellowship is infectious, and she has a great facility for getting on intimate terms with her audiences, making herself, for the time being, the personal friend of every man, woman, and child in the theatre the instant that she appears on the stage; and hers is a whole-souled, generous friendship, even if on the verge of Bohemia.

May Irwin was born in Whitby, a little town in Ontario, Canada, about twenty miles from Toronto, and she lived there until she went on the stage. When she was only eight years old she was the soprano in the Episcopal church choir in her native village. "Singing came naturally to me," she said. "My voice never had any cultivation. I harmonised as naturally as I talked, my voice was naturally placed,

and I produced tones by the law breathing taught me, not by any other rule. All through my childhood I sang in all the cantatas and such folly that is a part of going to school."

May and her sister Flora made their début on the variety stage in Buffalo, New York, when they were little tots in short dresses. That was in December, 1875, and the salary that they received was thirty dollars a week. The first thing they sang was "Sweet Genevieve." Poor Flo was so nervous that after it was over she fainted away, and May had to sing the encore alone, which she did with all the assurance in the world. In fact, I do not believe that May Irwin could faint if she tried. Engagements in variety theatres on a circuit that included Cleveland, St. Louis, and Cincinnati followed, and then the children did their first sketch, which was called "On Board the Mary Jane." Their third season found them at Tony Pastor's in New

York, and how that came about Miss Irwin tells as follows:

"It was a great thing for us, for Pastor's was the Mecca of all ambitious variety performers, — it was like heaven to the pious. Just to get to Tony Pastor's and be happy was in the mind of every struggling variety artist the length and breadth of the land. Our engagement came about in this way. We were appearing in Detroit. It was late in the season of 1876–77. We had been engaged for two weeks, and had been so successful that we stayed six. Tony Pastor's company was on tour, making, even in the cities, one night stands. On the day the company reached Detroit we had a matinee, and Pastor came to see us. He left town that night to go on to the next stand, and he wired back to us, 'Could you open in New York at my theatre September 13th? Wire terms.' Could we? Weren't we just crazy to? Sister and I sat up all that night

talking about it. Seemed 'sif we were to go to sleep that engagement might get away. It didn't, and we made our début in New York, September 13, 1877,—pretty good for two children. We stayed there seven years. We were engaged for sixty dollars a week, and at the end of our connection there we were getting eighty dollars. It was a small salary compared with what is paid now, and I realised it was small then for what we did. Our first sketch was 'A Rural Stroll,' which we played for four years. I own that it was great training, for we had to keep our sketch right up to the times. In addition to my turn with Flo, I used to do the leads in the burlesque which always wound up the evening, and those burlesques were not written out, you know. I used just to get instructions, so to speak, and go on and carry them out. It's great training, throws you on your own resources so. Why, I played everything

from babes in arms — fact — to decrepit old women."

Then came the most remarkable event in Miss Irwin's theatrical experience, her jump from variety at Tony Pastor's to the classic atmosphere of Augustin Daly's temple of dramatic art. "Oh, I was ambitious," Miss Irwin declared, when asked how it happened, "and in an ambitious person's career all advances seem like heavens — like the Buddhists, you see, we have a series of heavens. Mrs. Gilbert and Miss Rehan used to come to Tony Pastor's very often, and finally we were playing in Chicago at one theatre while Daly's company was playing at Hooley's, and Richard Dorney came up to see me one day and asked me if I would like to join Daly's. Would I? Well, you could not have kept me from it the moment the door was opened. The very next morning I met Mr. Daly by appointment and signed for three years. At the end of that time I reëngaged, but only

stayed another year, — four in all. It was very legitimate and delightful, but it was not profitable, and when an offer of three times my Daly salary came, just to do a single turn with the Boston Howard Athenæum Star Specialty Company, — well, I couldn't resist it."

Miss Irwin has distinct remembrances of her first rehearsal at Daly's. She had been accustomed so long to the free and easy way of doing things at Pastor's that she had quite forgotten what discipline meant. The play was Pinero's "Boys and Girls," and Miss Irwin was cast for a maiden lady about thirty-five years old. She went to rehearsal with her lines nicely memorised and her ideas of how the part should be played firmly fixed. This is how she tells the story:

"Now, I had to go on just after the curtain went up. I was supposed to smell an odour of burned fish, and Mr. Daly's directions to me were to come down, sniff, look

around and sniff harder. I at once objected right out loud. 'Why, no,' I said, 'that would be absurd. I should never look around for a moment. I should go straight to the fireplace, where the smell came from, of course. Why, Mr. Daly, do you suppose if I smelled something burning in my flat I wouldn't know enough to go to the range?'

"The Guv'nor — that's what we called him — must have been thunderstruck; every one else was; for the slow voice in which he said, 'Miss Irwin, I don't allow this,' was the least bit choky. I saw what I had done, of course. 'Very well,' I said, 'I'll try it your way.' And I did try, but I couldn't do it. I knew I was right, and he was wrong, or I thought I did, which is just the same thing, and this square jaw of mine just wouldn't let me. However, time after time we went over it. I think we must have done it twenty times, and then it was not much nearer what he wanted, but at last we went on.

"Well, we reached in a few days the second act, and at once struck a familiar snag. The Guv'nor was sitting down in the auditorium, and his solemn voice informed me, 'Not in the least like it!' 'Well, I'll try again,' and I did. Then up to me came the remark, 'I wonder where you have left your intelligence this morning.' It was the last straw. I had never been spoken to like that in my life. And before all the company! I tried to take a brace, but I could not, so I broke down and blubbered. It was the first time I ever did such a thing.

"'Go on,' said the inexorable voice, but I could only sob, 'Well, now, I guess you'll have to wait for me!' 'Very well; skip that and go on,' and I retired to a dark corner and cried as if my heart were broken. Pretty soon Daly hunted me up. 'Come, come,' said he, 'you mustn't do this. I treat all my people alike. If you don't do well, you, as well as I, will be criticised. It

is for your sake as much as for mine.' And that was the last encounter of that kind that we ever had. It did not take me long to understand that Mr. Daly knew more than I did, and to learn that to follow him was to make a hit."

While with the Howard Athenæum Company the Irwin sisters, as May and Flo were billed, produced John J. McNally's first dramatic work, a sketch called "Home Rule." During the summer of 1888, Miss Irwin played on the Pacific coast, acting Martha in Richard Golden's "Jed Prouty" company. Another year with the Howard Athenæum Company followed, and then Miss Irwin became a member of Russell's "The City Directory" company, perhaps the finest farce comedy organisation that was ever gotten together. In 1891 she joined Charles Frohman's forces, appearing with Henry Miller in "The Junior Partner" and after that in a burlesque called "The Poet and the

Puppets." It was in this burlesque that she introduced to the public the famous song, "After the Ball." At an after-the-theatre supper in her room she heard Alexander Martinetti pick out the air on a guitar. The melody pleased her, and she had him write it down and fit some words to it. Mr. Frohman was opposed to her singing a sentimental song in a burlesque, but he yielded to persuasion and let her try it. The song was a great hit.

After "The Poet and the Puppets" Miss Irwin became associated with Peter F. Dailey in McNally's farce, "The Country Sport." For the last three seasons she has starred, producing first Mr. McNally's farce-comedy, "The Widow Jones," and incidentally making herself famous through her "coon" songs and the broad humour and great unction that she put into her "rag-time," that latter-day syncopated musical freak, whose father is the old-time "nigger" minstrel. Her

CHAPTER XVII.

EFFIE SHANNON.

EFFIE SHANNON, who for several seasons has starred with Herbert Kelcey in Clyde Fitch's "The Moth and The Flame," in which she played the leading emotional character, first attracted attention as the ingénue of Daniel Frohman's Lyceum Theatre Company, in the days when Georgia Cayvan and Mr. Kelcey were the chief actors, and Fritz Williams the youthful comedian of that organisation, and when such sentimental plays as "The Wife" and "The Charity Ball" were considered the height of artistic dramatic achievement. Miss Shannon, although her name is good, honest Irish, is a genuine Yankee. Her father was

a native of Portsmouth, New Hampshire, and her mother was born in Haverhill, Massachusetts. Miss Shannon herself claims Cambridge, Massachusetts, as her birthplace, and there she lived when she received her initiation into stage life as a child actress in several of the Boston theatres. Her début was made in John McCullough's revival of "Coriolanus" at the Boston Theatre. All that she remembers of this performance was the fact that she appeared with many others, and threw wreaths in front of the triumphant hero. "It was a pleasant experience, however," Miss Shannon added, "and it gave me a taste of the life in which I have found so much enjoyment."

Her second character was Eva in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," which she played at the Howard Athenæum in Boston, then under the management of the late John Stetson. James S. Maffit, the pantomimist, afterward so long identified with the character of the

Lone Fisherman in "Evangeline," was the Lawyer Marks. Luke Martin was the Legree, and Mrs. Morse, who was one of the actors in the original production of the first dramatisation of Mrs. Stowe's novel, played Aunt Ophelia. The company, on the conclusion of the Boston engagement, toured New England.

"I shall never forget the feeling of pride which I experienced when I saw the bills of that production of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,'" Miss Shannon remarked. "There in big letters could be read, 'Eva, La Petite Shannon.' And I would stand in front of the bill-boards for hours, reading and re-reading my own name, wondering why larger crowds were not attracted by those delightful letters."

A little later Miss Shannon appeared in children's parts with Lawrence Barrett at the Boston Museum, and she was also in the children's production of "Pinafore"

at the same theatre, regarding which she tells the following amusing story:

"I was merely one of the sisters and cousins and aunts, because my singing voice was never phenomenal, and although I served as understudy to some of the other girls I never had an opportunity to appear. Do you remember that cast? There was Ida Mülle, the Josephine, and then Fritz Williams was the Sir Joseph Porter, and how we girls adored him! There was not a tot in that chorus who was not madly in love with the Admiral as he strutted around the stage in all the dignity of his position. I remember very well how I brought my autograph album for him to write in, and how he scrawled in his round, boyish hand, 'I am the monarch of the sea. Fritz Williams.' In later years, when Mr. Williams and I were members of the Lyceum Company in New York, I produced that autograph album and confronted him with it. It was the first time

that he had suspected that we had ever been in the same company before, and he was greatly surprised as he exclaimed, 'Were you that little yellow-haired girl?' and I admitted that I was."

When the "Pinafore" run came to an end Miss Shannon's mother took her to New York, where she received her education. Her first appearance in adult parts was with a company playing "The Silver King." Then she travelled with Robert Mantell, after which she was with the Daly company for a year and a half. This proved an excellent school for her, but, in common with other talented players who have been members of that company, she was given few chances to demonstrate her ability. From Daly's she went to the New York Lyceum Theatre, and there met with her greatest successes. As the romp, Kittie Ives, in "The Wife," and as the piquant, saucy Kate in "The Idler," she showed the genuine soubrette talent,

while as Bess in "The Charity Ball" she combined with it that sweet, sympathetic quality that the French termed "ingénue."

In 1893 Miss Shannon joined Rose Coghlan's company, playing Dora in "Diplomacy," a rôle of which she is very fond. After that she was with Mrs. Lily Langtry in her unfortunate production of "The City of Pleasure," and her next engagement was in support of Olga Nethersole. Then came her starring tour with Mr. Kelcey, after the successful run of "The Moth and the Flame" in New York City.

CHAPTER XVIII.

MRS. LESLIE CARTER.

Mrs. Leslie Carter's stage career began on November 10, 1890, when she made her début in New York in "The Ugly Duckling." Since that time she has publicly acted just three parts, the Quakeress in "Miss Helyett," Maryland Calvert in "The Heart of Maryland," and Zaza in "Zaza," and yet at present she is accounted one of the leading actresses on the American stage. Surely this is a record unique in theatrical history. Let it not be thought, however, that Mrs. Carter's stage life has been all cakes and ale. Far from it. Nine years of hard work and constant study lie behind her, and while she has publicly acted only four charac-

ters, she has thoroughly prepared and privately played time and time again over a score of parts.

Mrs. Carter's phenomenal success is due to the professional skill, critical judgment and untiring efforts of Mr. David Belasco, who took charge of her dramatic training just before her appearance in "The Ugly Duckling." When he accepted her as a pupil, Mr. Belasco showed the keenest acumen. At that time Mrs. Carter seemed to have but few of the physical advantages that one associates with success on the stage. Indeed, it might be said that her only favourable point apparent at first sight was her hair, wonderfully heavy and a fiery red, that framed her pale face in a burning halo. Perhaps Mr. Belasco noted her eyes, deeply gray and serious; possibly he was attracted by the expressive play of her features, or mayhap he pinned faith on that firmly set mouth and stern lower jaw. However it

came about, the contract was made, and Mrs. Carter gave herself unreservedly into her trainer's keeping. She became for all practical purposes Mr. Belasco's willing slave.

Mrs. Carter's work in "The Ugly Duckling" was plainly that of a novice. "Crude but full of promise," was how Mr. Belasco characterised it, and it may be said that he was sanguine rather than otherwise. "I shall never forget the first night I played," said Mrs. Carter, in describing her début. "I stood like a dummy waiting for my time to come for walking on the stage, and when that soft, swelling music that heralded my approach reached my ears didn't I wish to die right there! I stood as if chained to where I was until it was almost past the time. Douglas Oakley, the hero in 'The Ugly Duckling,' said: 'Kate, bonnie Kate!' as he lay on the hearth looking at my picture, — not my own real picture, of course. Then Mr. Belasco said, 'Move now

or the play is ruined.' You may be sure I felt far from being a 'bonnie Kate!' The clapping of hands brought me to my senses and then I warmed to my work. Somehow or other the very naturalness of the first incidents helped to reassure me."

"Miss Helyett," which followed, was a musical comedy, and in it Mrs. Carter really met with much success. It was an awkward little part, demure and quiet. She continued with it, improving constantly, until March, 1893, when she closed her season in Kansas City and disappeared. No one knew what had become of her; in fact, no one cared very much, and when, in October, 1895, she emerged from her retirement to make an astonishing success in Mr. Belasco's play, "The Heart of Maryland," the surprise was complete. What Mrs. Carter did during that mysterious year and a half, which was passed in her New York apartments at 63 Clinton Place, is best related in her own words.

"Ah, yes, I was a crude beginner in 'Miss Helyett,' yet before I got through with that rôle I had learned a great deal. One thing I did obtain was muscular control. It gave me equipoise, repose. But it was during my retirement that I began to study with brain and will. In that time I went through fifty-eight plays with Mr. Belasco. I set my teeth and always kept before me the play he was writing around me, so to speak, and I was determined nothing should dash my energies. I would rehearse every phase of an emotion, until I could portray it with more or less facility.

"How were all my little rehearsals at home conducted? Ah, they were pretty sad at times. Mr. Belasco would select a rôle, talk with me upon it, make suggestions, answer questions, and then leave me to work it out. I would not see him, probably, for a week or ten days. Meanwhile, I acted and reacted, and posed and posed, and worked

often with one single gesture or one single vocal inflection for half a day at a time. One thing I always did attend to, I never forsook the weak place to return to it again. I went on to nothing else until I had in some sensible way conquered the difficulty. And this was where I found the horrible discouragement of dramatic technique. If you write or if you sew, you see the result of your labour before your eyes; you are buoyed up in your work by visible encouragement. In dramatic study you go over and over and see nothing for so long for your slavish repetition and expenditure of energy. You know simply you are aiming at something and you are not getting it. But, after awhile, I found out about that. It comes at once. Before you stop to realise, there is a lesson accomplished; it becomes a spontaneous effort. You don't think any more of control. The action is part of yourself when merged in that rôle, and performs itself unconsidered.

"After my days of work alone, Mr. Belasco would come in the evening, and then the chairs and tables were swept away, and we had a stage. He read the other parts and I rehearsed my rôle. Nine times out of ten I was all wrong at my first trial. 'Not a bit like it,' Mr. Belasco would say, and then, in his corrections made upon my practical study, I learned my valuable lesson. It hurt sometimes, but when I set to study on the amended plan I always felt I had achieved something I was not going to lose again, and I realised my growing strength.

"From what rôles do I consider I derived most benefit? There are two uppermost in my mind. First, Beatrice, by all means. Her character has so many phases. It seemed to embrace almost everything I needed. I lived with Beatrice and thought with her, and made her moods my own, and then failed with her on my mimic stage when Mr. Belasco rehearsed me at night,

and went back again and conceived another Beatrice in this mood, and yet another Beatrice in that, and changed my ideal a dozen times, always working faithfully on the new until at last Mr. Belasco approved me in the part as a whole. No study, however, no practice technically legitimate, is lost even where the ideal be fictitious. You gain flexibility in a detail which will fit in elsewhere. Leah is the other rôle which did wonders for me in the mastery of the stronger emotions. Those long speeches of hers embrace a volume of lessons, and after these two characters I have no special identification of improvement with the others. They brought about a general advancement."

Mrs. Carter played Maryland Calvert in this country for three seasons, and then appeared in London in the same character, opening at the Adelphi Theatre, April 9, 1898. Her success there was all that could be desired, the play running for 145 performances.

"Zaza," in which Mrs. Carter achieved such a triumph last season, was produced in Washington, December 26, 1898, and the dramatic critics of the capital immediately described the play as a masterpiece, and named the actress "the American Bernhardt." "Zaza" was originally a French drama written by Simon and Berton for Réjane, by whom it was brought out at the Vaudeville Theatre, Paris. The English version is by Mr. Belasco, who succeeded in the difficult task of ridding the work of the French audaciousness that characterised it in the original, still retaining in full the play's strong dramatic interest. Mr. Belasco's artistic touch was sure until the last act, when he erred for the sake of a happy ending. "Zaza" tells the pathetic story of a music hall actress, who rises from a depth of illicit love to a height of pure self-abnegation. The ethics and morality of the drama have been widely discussed,

and, as usual, the points raised have been answered strictly according to the particular arguer's bias. Mrs. Carter's rôle calls for emotional acting of the strongest and most varied character, and there has been no great difference of opinion regarding the power and impressiveness of her personation. The following critique is that of Franklin Fyles:

"Good stage literature as the play was, and almost faultless as the stage craft of its representation was generally, there was one thing which eclipsed all else in a triumph seldom equalled in a theatre. That portion of the occasion's success, and much the largest cause of it, was the acting of Mrs. Leslie Carter. Not since Bernhardt was here had New York seen any approach to the Bernhardt kind of art in dramatic expression. It was a more versatile and varied performance, it is only the truth to say, than any other American player, man

or woman, is capable of giving. Through the first act Zaza was no more than a wanton, not ashamed of herself, because she neither knew nor cared anything about virtue. The place was behind the scenes of a variety stage, and the depiction of life in the purlieus of the theatre was ruthlessly illustrated. In it the low-bred heroine figured as the mischievous enticer of a man. In the next act she was shown with him in a home of forbidden love, happy in her faithfulness to him, and with never a thought or expectation of becoming his wife. In the third, she was at his house in Paris, wild at first with the desire of retaliation for his deception, then touched pitifully by the sight of his child that resembled him, and then won over to self-sacrificial silence. In the fourth, she was back at her home, well-nigh crazed by grief, utterly heart-broken, changeful of purpose, clinging desperately to a belief in the man's

love until convinced beyond hope that he would not let his mistress take him from his wife, and then madly vehement in her denunciation of him. It was at this climax that the assemblage let itself loose in a tremendously enthusiastic demonstration.

"What Mrs. Carter had done to warrant so much approbation at that time will surely stand the severest test of calmer criticism, and still stand as proof positive of genius. She has passed from farcical moments to those of the deepest emotion; from heartless coquetry to passionate love; from carelessness to despair, and all with equal facility. In none of the sharply contrasting phases of the creature's experience had she lapsed a moment from the essential attributes of the character. Such a portrayal could have been based only on a thorough and minute analysis of the rôle which Mr. Belasco may have made for her, but the embodiment of it in a way to render it graphic down to the

minutest detail, and to do this so that laughter and tears followed each other as she willed them to, was a triumph of her own genius. She had advanced steadily from crudity to the finest of artistic success."

CHAPTER XIX.

MARY SHAW.

MARY SHAW had long been considered one of the finest leading women in this country, when she made the greatest success of her career at the close of last season as Mrs. Alving in John Blair's special production of Ibsen's "Ghosts" in New York City. "Ghosts," whatever one may think of its morbidness and its unpleasant investigations into medical science, is certainly one of the strongest acting dramas known to the modern theatre, and its characters afford opportunities for wonderfully effective work to actors that have the ability and training to realise them. Miss Shaw's theatrical experience has been wide-extended. It has embraced

many of the chief rôles of the classic drama in addition to numberless parts in plays of less enduring worth. Her talents, too, are of an exceptional order. They found in the Ibsen play just the material they wanted, and the result was a success that astonished even her most enthusiastic admirers, who could hardly have expected so much from her in her first impersonation of an Ibsen creation.

Mrs. Alving is, perhaps, the most complete character in the Ibsen drama. She is a witness of, rather than a participant in, the sins and weaknesses of mankind. Her life is devoted to concealing from public view the debaucheries of her husband, a libertine of the vilest sort, with the result that he dies universally respected, leaving a son to inherit all the father's mental and physical diseases. The son, ignorant of the evil which has been passed down to him, returns from school in the first stages of

paresis, imagining that his health has failed because of overwork. The end is incurable madness, for the mother, at the last moment, finds herself unable to administer the dose of morphia that was to end the boy's life when his mind failed entirely. It is a horrible play, frightfully depressing in its fatalism, but its dramatic strength is tremendous.

"Ibsen's dramas will finally be made familiar by the actors because they afford such opportunities for the display of intelligence, power, and technical skill as are to be found in hardly any other plays in existence," wrote a New York critic. "Hardly an Ibsen play is acted in New York without greatly bettering the reputation of some one or two actors. When 'Ghosts' was first given, a few years ago, it revealed Courtney Thorpe as the paretic son in a wholly new light of intellectual capacity. 'John Gabriel Borkman' revealed Maude Banks as very close to a great actress; Mrs. Fiske's nota-

ble advance in power was first shown in a matinée of 'The Doll's House,' and New York had its only test of the talent of Elizabeth Robins in 'Hedda Gabler.' Last night the honours fell to Mary Shaw, who has long been known as one of the most capable actresses on our stage, but whose Mrs. Alving shows an intellectual grasp of Ibsen's idea and a command of resources of expression far beyond the reach of any but great actresses. As the chief actor of a theatre devoted to the modern intellectual drama, Miss Shaw would be a power."

"Miss Shaw gave a most impressive revelation of Mrs. Alving's general competency as a woman," declared Norman Hapgood. "In the scenes with the pastor she had a sweet and kindly manner of looking all around him and sizing him up. As she stood there reducing all organised society to a conventional spectre, she looked so beneficent and serious that the woman stood

out far above her rebellious theories and took the outlines of a great dramatic figure."

Mary Shaw comes of an old New England family. Her father is Levi W. Shaw, who is connected with the Inspection of Buildings Department of the city of Boston. The family originally lived in Wolfboro, N. H., where the homestead, now two hundred and fifty years old, still stands, and Miss Shaw has in her possession old pewter plates, family heirlooms, from which pieces have been cut to be moulded into Colonial bullets. She was born and educated in Boston, graduated from the grammar and high schools of that city, and before she went on the stage taught for a short time in the Boston public schools. Her voice gave out under the strain of schoolroom work, and that led her to study elocution, which in turn directed her attention to the stage. She became acquainted with Annie Clarke, then the leading lady of the Boston Museum Stock Company, and through

her she met R. M. Field, the manager of the Museum. There did not seem to be any opening in the Museum Company at that time, however, and, armed with a letter of introduction to Dion Boucicault from John Boyle O'Reilly, Miss Shaw went to New York. She was not successful in that city, either, and she returned home and for a time satisfied her histrionic ambition by appearing in amateur theatricals. One of her performances in this line was Kate Hardcastle in "She Stoops to Conquer," which she played in the vestry of the East Boston Unitarian Church.

Finally, in 1879, she was engaged as the Chorus in an extravaganza at the Boston Museum, called "A Robisonade," and her first appearance was made through the floor by means of a trap. The first play that she appeared in was a revival of "Diplomacy," and the occasion was also E. H. Sothern's first night.

"We had two small parts," said Miss Shaw, recalling the incident. "He was a French valet and I the maid, and we had quite a little scene — perhaps ten minutes. Eddie entered and spoke half a dozen words, looked at me wildly for a moment, and then fairly flew from the stage. I meekly followed him. We were fined five dollars apiece and retired to the positions of walking gentleman and lady for some time. The next time we were entrusted with parts was in 'Pippins,' in which Eddie did so well that he was quite restored to favour. He was a dear boy!"

Miss Shaw made her first pronounced hit at the Museum in a play called "A Midsummer Madness." She was advanced rapidly in the company, and, to use her own words, "simply played everything." After two years she went to Augustin Daly's company in New York, securing this engagement through Fanny Davenport, whom

Miss Shaw supported at the Museum in "Pique."

"Miss Davenport met me after the play, in the wings," Miss Shaw said, "and, after complimenting me on my performance, asked me if I didn't want to go with her. 'I can only give you fifty dollars a week at present,' she remarked. The sum appeared almost fabulous to me. It seemed like the instant realisation of all my fondest and most cherished dreams, and it came upon me so suddenly that I was nearly struck dumb with surprise and gratitude. I had all I could possibly do to keep from showing Miss Davenport that I was surprised, yes, more than that, astounded, at her liberal offer. I managed, however, to control my feelings sufficiently, and, thanking her for her kindness, said I would think it over, speaking as indifferently as though I had had a hundred offers equally as good. Then I went home, and that night I never slept a wink, because

I was afraid she would change her mind and withdraw the offer."

After a season with Daly, Miss Shaw supported Miss Davenport on the road in the old comedies. She then appeared in "Young Mrs. Winthrop," under Daniel Frohman's management, after which she joined Modjeska, with whom she remained five seasons, appearing in prominent rôles in the Modjeska repertory, which at that time included the rarely acted "Two Gentlemen of Verona" and "Measure for Measure." It was while she was with Modjeska that Miss Shaw had a conversation with Matthew Arnold about her conception of Queen Elizabeth in "Mary Stuart."

"I met him," said Miss Shaw, "at one of Modjeska's receptions in New York, and he said, 'I want to talk with you about your Queen Elizabeth.' I found that he objected to my impersonation as making her too feminine, too tender, dragged by fate, against

her will, to the execution of Mary. 'The Elizabeth you represent is not the Elizabeth of history,' he said. And I replied: 'Mr. Arnold, when I was given that part I was not asked to play Mr. Hume's, or Mr. Macaulay's, or Mr. Froude's Elizabeth, but Mr. Schiller's. Schiller saw in the story of these two women only deep humanity in all its environments, and he analysed them with his own heart and brain. He did not care for history. And when I read the part I tried to read Schiller into it, to feel as he felt, to see with his eyes, and so I dismissed the historian.' Mr. Arnold leaned back in his chair and said, 'I believe you are right.'"

When Miss Shaw left Modjeska, she became connected with the Julia Marlowe company, with which she remained a season. A season as a star in a comedy from the German, called "A Drop of Poison," followed, and then she became Helen Barry's

chief support in a successful farce called "A Night's Frolic." In 1893 Miss Shaw was the Rosalind in the production of "As You Like It," by the Professional Women's League. When Mrs. Fiske produced "Tess of the D'Urbervilles," Miss Shaw made a great impression as Marion. Since leaving Mrs. Fiske, Miss Shaw has acted chiefly in special productions in New York.

CHAPTER XX.

OLGA NETHERSOLE.

OLGA NETHERSOLE is by birth and training an English actress, and in a strict classification she would naturally be given to that country; but she is so universally known in the United States, and her presence here of late years has been so constant, that it has seemed proper to stretch a point and include her among the American players. A woman of much personal force, she has during the past season established herself as a great dramatic artist by her wonderfully vivid acting of Paula Tanqueray in Arthur Wing Pinero's masterpiece, "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray."

The Nethersole Paula is a most fascinat-

ing study. The actress has the character so absolutely under control; she understands so clearly every phase of the woman's mind; she is so sensitive to every emotion that Paula feels; she conceives so fully the motives underlying Paula's every act, that the spectator sees, not Paula, the creation of Pinero's fancy, but Paula, a living, suffering member of the human family. Olga Nethersole lays bare the soul of Paula Tanqueray. It is a soul seared and scarred with many burnings, the soul of a woman whose natural nobility of character is too great to be entirely debased, even by a life of harlotry; for Paula, removed from her environment of sin, her lungs breathing in an atmosphere of purity, quickly has reawakened her instincts for honesty and for truth.

Do you call such a character impossible, out of tune with human nature? I do not think so. Impurity does not by any means

signify total depravity, and I venture to claim that in life's byways and hedges one might find many potential Paulas.

Paula's cynicism and her loss of ideal were the natural results of her wayward life. She had sacrificed her innocence, and she did not see the world through eyes blinded with purity. But her moral sense was sure, and she knew human nature, particularly woman nature, down to the rock bottom. Moreover, she understood herself, and the curious flashes of analytical light that she shed on her own motives, especially during moments of severe emotional strain were great unveilers of character.

Miss Nethersole's authority in this exacting rôle was simply beyond question. From the beautiful, sensual creature of the first act to the broken-hearted, broken-spirited woman of the last act was a far reach, but there was no step in the intervening distance that the dramatist did not prepare with masterly sub-

tilty, and there was no point in the dramatist's development that the actress did not seize upon with absolute surety and expound with convincing sincerity. Physically Miss Nethersole realised the character perfectly. Her exuberant beauty, which she so bountifully displayed in the first act, explained Tanqueray's infatuation almost without the sensuality of look and caress that she lavished upon him. Sensuality, it should be stated, vanished entirely after the first act, giving way before Paula's growing womanliness.

I have found it extremely difficult to write of Miss Nethersole's acting in this character, for she gave me no impression of detail and no idea of Olga Nethersole apart from Paula Tanqueray. Surely the art of acting can do no more than that.

Olga Nethersole was born in Kensington, London, and was educated at private schools, partly in England and partly in Germany.

The death of her father made it necessary for her to choose some vocation, and she decided on the stage. Prior to 1887 she had occasionally acted, but her professional career really began in the spring of that year, when she joined Charles Hawtrey's company at the Theatre Royal, Brighton, appearing in a low comedy part, Lettice Vane in Henry Hamilton's play, "Harvest." About a year and a half was spent by Miss Nethersole in the English provinces, and her first London appearance was made in July, 1888, at the Royal Adelphi Theatre, in "The Union Jack," by Sidney Grundy and Henry Pettitt. Other engagements in London at the St. James's Theatre, in "The Dean's Daughter," and at the Strand Theatre followed, and then at the opening of the Garrick Theatre Miss Nethersole became a member of John Hare's company, appearing in Pinero's "The Profligate," in "La Tosca," and "A Fool's Paradise."

While still on the roster of this company, with which she was connected four years, she visited Australia with Charles Cartwright, remaining there ten months and appearing in a varied repertory which included "The Idler," "Moths," and "The Village Priest." On returning to England she rejoined Mr. Hare's company at the Garrick Theatre, and immediately evidenced the remarkable improvement she had made in her methods by her experience in Australia. During the time she was with Mr. Hare she played successfully the part of Zicka in the memorable revival of Sardou's "Diplomacy." An engagement at the Criterion followed, where Miss Nethersole achieved distinction in the leading rôle of Isaac Henderson's drama, "The Silent Battle," and in January, 1894, she leased the Royal Court Theatre and successfully produced "The Transgressor."

The following fall she came to this coun-

try, making her American début at Palmer's Theatre, New York, on October 15th, and subsequently making a most successful tour of the country. She played besides "The Transgressor," Marguerite Gauthier in "Camille," Gilberte in "Frou-Frou," and Juliet in "Romeo and Juliet." In May, 1895, Miss Nethersole assumed the chief rôle in "The Notorious Mrs. Ebbsmith," at the Garrick, London, following Mrs. Patrick Campbell. That fall she again visited America, having added to her repertory "Denise" and "The Wife of Scarli." June 6, 1896, she produced "Carmen" at the Gaiety Theatre, London, which play made an immense sensation in this country the following winter. Last season, Miss Nethersole's fourth in the United States, was devoted to "The Second Mrs. Tanqueray," a poetical drama, "The Termagant," and "The Profligate."

Miss Nethersole is a strikingly handsome woman, slightly under medium height, with

a figure slender, sinuous, and graceful. Her eyes are large and brilliant, a dark gray in colour, though it is difficult to be sure of this, for they change constantly with every passing thought and emotion. Her crowning glory is her luxuriant hair, which is of a peculiar tawny shade. She rarely wears a wig on the stage, though many have found it difficult to believe that the rich mass of hair, which sometimes seems a ruddy hue and other times almost bronze, is really her own.

"The Transgressor" by A. W. Gattie, in which Miss Nethersole made her first appearance in this country, was a somewhat crude play of the "problem" order, and in it the actress's opportunities to show her emotional power were somewhat limited. Regarding her début, William Winter wrote:

"Miss Nethersole gained the confidence and friendship of her audience at once, and earned the hearty greeting she received. She has the quality of charm which is so

invaluable on the stage, and the lack of which cannot be counterbalanced by any amount of industry or study. She gains sympathy by the simple force of personality. In the technicalities of her art she is accomplished, but not always finished and matured. The fullness and roundness of her power are not yet reached. She has youth, beauty, grace, and self-command. Her voice is musical and her manner refined. With these qualities she will surely be admired and will make her way. Greater authority and command may come hereafter. Through two acts last night Miss Nethersole had little to do but to be on the stage for a part of the time. Her talk was bright and snappy, and her face was gay and sunny. These things pleased so far as they went. They showed that the actress was at home on the stage and that it was likely to be agreeable at any time to see her there. They showed that she had elegance and repose,

highly desirable qualities, essential indeed. But that was all. At the end of the third act she had a scene of a sort which it is common to designate as 'strong.' It was not sensible, and it was not womanly. She could not enforce the conviction that such a woman as she had shown herself to be would do what she did. She did show that she could reach a fine emotional height, but the act of the woman whose part she played seemed incredible, and she did not make it seem anything else."

Miss Nethersole made her greatest success that first season in "Camille." It was an intensely realistic impersonation, deeply emotional and ardently passionate, an impersonation that moved one by its great dramatic vigour rather than by subtilty of conception or finish in acting. At that time Miss Nethersole displayed a certain crudity of method and a proneness to exaggeration which later developed into those unpleasant

mannerisms of speech and gesture that so marred some of her work. Yet she made Camille so affecting that at times her pathos touched the heart with a feeling that was almost too genuine for comfort. She was at her best in the scene with M. Duval, a scene which she played with uncommon dignity and a tender simplicity that rarely failed to win the tribute of tears. Last year Miss Nethersole introduced a novelty in her performance of the play by costuming the characters in the fashions of 1841, the time the drama was written. The idea, I believe, was originated by Sarah Bernhardt.

Miss Nethersole's Juliet was not highly esteemed. While she had moments of genuine power, her acting as a whole was uneven, besides being hurt by undue force and intensity. Her balcony scene was well done, but the scene in which Juliet learns of Tybalt's death and Romeo's banishment, and especially the potion scene, she almost

ruined by overacting. Dr. William J. Rolfe, the Shakespearian scholar, however, found much to commend in the impersonation, regarding which he wrote to Miss Nethersole:

"One of the best features of your rendering of Juliet, as it seemed to me, was the clear distinction you made between the girl of sixteen (or fourteen, as Shakespeare makes her, and I think you might retain the old text in that matter) and the woman she becomes under the influence of love and sorrow. I am aware that some of the professional critics find fault with you for this, but I think they should rather give you special praise for it. For myself, I liked all the points in which your personation of the Veronese heroine differed from the conventional Juliet on the stage. I believe that if in some respects it does not now please critical judges, it will gradually commend itself to the best of them, if not to all. I have no doubt that I should enjoy

it more a second or third time than I did at first, though, as I have said, I liked it even then."

I should be pleased to omit any reference to "Carmen," but the notoriety of the Nethersole kiss will hardly permit that. The adaptation of the novel that Miss Nethersole used, made a filthy play in which lust and animal passion were shown with disgusting frankness. Even if one ignored the vileness, he found but a cheap melodrama, poorly constructed at that, and abounding in mock heroics, false platitudes, and cheap sentiment. The play lacked a vestige of the romanticism that idealised the opera, and made it a thing apart from the essential nastiness of the theme. Miss Nethersole's acting was a study in lasciviousness, marvellously vivid and marvellously true to life. Indeed, therein was the chief cause for censure.

Before "The Termagant," by Louis N.

Parker and Murray Carson, was produced, Miss Nethersole spoke thus of the work:

"It is a dramatic poem, beautiful and simple, as dainty as a gossamer. There is one scene in the second act that I like the best. There the love story is told simply, very simply, and an old well is there by which the cavalier and his loved one stand. It is in the days of Ferdinand and Isabella, you know, and the characters are dressed in the exquisite costumes of the fifteenth century. As the lovers talk they take the old well into their secret, and make of it their confidant, and trust their story to its deep waters. There is another scene where she tries to poison him, and in the last act the threads are gathered up, and the characters hold a court of love, just as they did in those old romantic days."

Miss Nethersole, however, misjudged the play sadly, for it proved a failure from the first. It was an extremely artificial affair,

with hardly a character of blood and sinew, About all that could be praised were the beautiful scenery and the handsome costumes. The Princess Beatrix, whom Miss Nethersole played, was a purely theatrical personage, without any genuinely human characteristic on which the actress could found a convincing conception, a motiveless character of annoying fickleness. "The Termagant," however, was valuable in so far as it defined Miss Nethersole's sphere as a player. It plainly showed that she could not act a part that was untrue to nature. Apparently she must approach her characters from within, and not until she feels that the emotions inspired by the action are honest can she convey those emotions with any convincing sincerity. Her mannerisms seem to result when she tries to impress on her audieuce a mental state that does not logically exist.

CHAPTER XXI.

LILLIAN LAWRENCE.

On May 3, 1897, Lillian Lawrence made her first appearance as the leading lady of the Castle Square Company of Boston. She was almost unknown in that city, her only previous recent visit there having been made in 1896, when she was playing Mrs. Bulford in the sensational melodrama, "The Great Diamond Robbery." It did not take long, however, for Miss Lawrence to establish herself as a prime favourite with the patrons of the Boston house, and to-day her personal following in that city is something to marvel at. Miss Lawrence, barring a slight tendency toward monotony in her methods of dramatic expression, is an ideal actress for

the stock company whose rule it is to change its bill every week. She seems to have an infinite capacity for hard work, and she has also the intuitive dramatic sense, without which no player can succeed in this hurry-skurry and extremely arduous variety of theatrical effort. She has considerable versatility, though she has not in abundance the faculty of differentiation. She realises with ability two widely different characterisations, such as, for example, June in "Blue Jeans" and Ann Cruger in "The Charity Ball;" but give her two similar characters, such as Ann Cruger and Helen Truman in "The Wife," and one finds that she fails thoroughly to individualise them. This is, of course, the severest of all tests of a player's art, resources, and versatility, and it is not a test that can be applied with absolute fairness to an actress, who, like Miss Lawrence, cannot devote any length of time to developing the fine points of a character. In acting, as in

painting, it is the little lines that make the portrait stand out as something apart from others of its kind, and it is also the little lines that require the deepest study and the most careful consideration.

Primarily, Miss Lawrence is an emotional actress of the old school; her expression of sorrow and of passion is accomplished, not so much by suggestion, as by actual demonstration. Her pathos in many characters is sincere and touching, and even when she fails to sound just the right note in the portrayal of grief and pain, her fine quality of embodying in her rôles those elements of womanliness and feminine charm, which are so evident in her work, gains even for her poorest parts sympathy and interest. One would not call Miss Lawrence a great emotional actress, but in the wide field, whose boundaries fall just short of the point where the heartrending passions pass from emotion into tragedy, she is ably competent, and in

her appeal to persons whose susceptibilities have not been deadened by too much theatre-going she is extraordinarily powerful.

In comedy Miss Lawrence has not the touch-and-go style that marks the born comédienne, but she has intelligence, which enables her to present, with commendable ease and more than ordinary success, parts that are not naturally in her line. As is often the case with actors, whose comedy is the result of study rather than of inspiration, Miss Lawrence is on the whole better in eccentric comedy rôles than she is in those only slightly set apart from every-day life. This seems strange at first thought, but in reality it is a logical consequence and just what one might naturally expect. Eccentric comedy, in most of its phases, is but a burlesque on nature, and there is nothing in the theatrical line quite so easy as burlesque, especially when the burlesquer is assisted by a make-up that of itself wins the first

encounter with the audience. True comedy, on the other hand, approaches more nearly to nature than any other form of acting. The personages in that variety of the drama are like ordinary men and women, and they do things that the average human being might reasonably be expected to do under similar circumstances. They have experiences that the average audience understands, and the actor's expression of the emotions caused by these experiences must be lifelike and genuine to escape critical condemnation. There is no higher form of dramatic art than first-class comedy acting.

Lillian Lawrence was born in Alexandria, Virginia, in the middle sixties. When she was two years old her parents moved to San Francisco, and there Miss Lawrence passed her girlhood. When she was in the grammar school, Charles E. Lacke, manager of Bush Street Theatre in San Francisco, chose her as one of thirty-two children to

take part in a living chess spectacle at his playhouse, and thus her theatrical career began, when she was thirteen years old, as the Queen's Knight in the chess game in the operetta, "The Royal Middy." Miss Lawrence's parents were opposed to her going on the stage, but when they perceived that her heart was set on it, they relented. She remained with "The Royal Middy" after it was transferred to the California Theatre, and for three seasons she sang in light opera at that house in the company of which Emily Melleville was the prima donna. Then Miss Lawrence's voice failed, and she took her first engagement as an actress in a stock company in Oakland, California, where she remained for two years. At the end of that time she retired from the stage for two years, but resumed acting when she was twenty years old as a member of a small dramatic company that toured California. One of the characters Miss Lawrence played at this time

was Sister Genevieve in "The Two Orphans." Next she was with the Cordway Stock Company, which appeared principally in San Diego, California, and Portland, Oregon, presenting each week a change of bill.

Miss Lawrence did not come East until 1892. Three days after her arrival in New York she was engaged to play Marie Louise to Hortense Rhea's Josephine. She acted with a Dayton, Ohio, stock company during the next summer, and in the fall she joined the Kate Claxton company, appearing as Henrietta in "The Two Orphans." She returned to the Dayton company for the following summer, and that winter saw her filling special engagements in New York in "Lady Gladys," at the Madison Square Theatre with Minnie Seligman, and in "Mrs. Dascott," at the Fifth Avenue with Katherine Clemmons. After "Mrs. Dascott," which was a failure, Miss Lawrence was for a short time with "In Old Kentucky,"

and she finished the season in Carrie Turner's company, which was giving "The Crust of Society." That summer she was a member of the National Theatre Stock Company of Washington, and at the beginning of the regular season she came under the management of Charles Frohman, acting in "Men and Women." She was reëngaged for the National Theatre Stock Company the next summer, and the following season found her playing Shakespearian rôles with Thomas W. Keene. The season before she came to the Castle Square Company of Boston she was with "The Bachelor's Baby" and "The Great Diamond Robbery," in addition to a short engagement at the Girard Avenue Theatre in Philadelphia.

During her stay of two years and a half at the Castle Square Theatre Miss Lawrence has appeared in over seventy-five different characters. A complete list of the rôles that she played at this house up to the

beginning of the last summer season follows:

Helen Truman, "The Wife;" Jo, "The Lottery of Love;" Lilian, "The Banker's Daughter;" Rosa Leigh, "Rosedale;" Mrs. Page, "Alabama;" Esther Eccles, "Caste;" Margaret Knowlton, "The Lost Paradise;" Rose Mumpleford, "Confusion;" Georgia Gwynne, "The New South;" Bella, "School;" Mabel Renfrew, "Pique;" Bessie Barton, "Woman against Woman;" Nina Ralston, "Jim the Penman;" Minna, "Little Lord Fauntleroy;" Clairette Monteith, "A Fair Rebel;" Mrs. Horton, "Doctor Bill;" Trilby O'Farrall, "Trilby;" Ann Cruger, "The Charity Ball;" Cicily Blaine, "The Galley Slave;" Mary Brandon, "My Partner;" Agnes Rodman, "Men and Women;" Leila Caprices, "A Social Highwayman;" Lady Noeline, "The Amazons;" Gertrude Ellingham, "Shenandoah;" Mrs. Seabrookes, "Captain Swift;" Margaret Marrable, "The

Fatal Card;" Kitty Verdun, "Charley's Aunt;" Rosa Dartle, "Little Em'ly;" Valentine de Mornay, "A Celebrated Case;" Hazel Kirke, "Hazel Kirke;" Kate Vernon, "In Mizzoura;" Countess Zicka, "Diplomacy;" Princess Flavia, "The Prisoner of Zenda;" Mary Melrose, "Our Boys;" Florence Winthrop, "Americans Abroad;" Constance, "Young Mrs. Winthrop;" Agatha Posket, "The Magistrate;" Alice Greer, "The Ensign;" Dora, "Christopher Jr.;" Rachel McCreery, "Held by the Enemy;" Lady Isabel, "East Lynne;" June, "Blue Jeans;" Elizabeth Linley, "Sheridan, or the Maid of Bath;" Niobe, "Niobe;" Julie De Varion, "An Enemy to the King;" Fifi Oritanski, "All the Comforts of Home;" Bess Marks, "The Lights o' London;" Lydia Ransome, "A Southern Romance;" Suzzanne, "A Scrap of Paper;" Edith Garland, "Across the Potomac;" Armande Chandoce, "Led Astray;" Carrie, "The

Guv'nor;" Marion Paoli, "Mr. Barnes of New York;" Marguerite Otto, "Friends;" Mrs. Bulford, "The Great Diamond Robbery;" Sophie Hackett, "Brother John;" Roxane, "Cyrano de Bergerac;" Mrs. Gilbert Brandon, "The Solicitor;" Fanny Ten Eyck, "Divorce;" Martha Custis, "Col. George of Mt. Vernon;" May Blossom, "May Blossom;" Anne of Austria, "The Three Musketeers;" Ilda Barosky, "Darkest Russia;" Fanny Hadden, "Captain Lettarblair;" Queena Montrose and Mlle. Rene, "Queena;" Rose Woodmere, "The Prodigal Daughter;" Kate Kennion, "The Girl I Left Behind Me;" Lady Hardy, "The Idler;" Alice Ainsley, "Cumberland, '61;" Ruth, "A Temperance Town;" Bethel Grant, "Just a Day Dream."

CHAPTER XXII.

BLANCHE BATES.

BLANCHE BATES was the histrionic sensation of last season, and by her phenomenal success in "The Great Ruby," when that melodrama was produced at Daly's Theatre on February 9, 1899, and a month later by her remarkable acting of Miladi in Sidney Grundy's version of "The Three Musketeers," which was produced in Montreal on March 6th, with James O'Neill as D'Artagnan, she arose from comparative obscurity to a position of prominence on the American stage.

She was born in Portland, Oregon, in 1873, and was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. F. M. Bates, widely popular as leading man and

woman on the Pacific Coast and in Australia. At the time of her birth her father was manager of the beautiful Oro Fino Theatre in Portland, and also leading man in the company. Three years later he left Portland and went to San Francisco, where he lived the rest of his life.

Miss Bates's parents did not intend that she should be an actress. She was educated in the same way as are thousands of girls whose existence is to be passed in the usual walks of life, and her going on the stage was purely accidental. An old friend of her mother, L. R. Stockwell, manager of Stockwell's Theatre in San Francisco, now known as the Columbia, had a benefit, and to please him Miss Bates took a part in a one-act play by Brander Matthews, called "This Picture and That." This taste of life behind the footlights only whetted her appetite for more, and, after acting for a short time in T. Daniel Frawley's stock company in San

Francisco, she went to New York, where, on the recommendation of Mr. Frawley, who was also a member of the company, she was engaged by James Neill for the Giffen and Neill company. She was with that organisation for about twenty-five weeks, receiving a salary of thirty-five dollars a week, and appearing in Denver, Salt Lake City, and Portland. Then Mr. Frawley bought out the interests of Giffen and Neill, and Miss Bates continued with him during his San Francisco run, being in May, 1895, advanced to the leading comedy rôles.

Her first great success was Mrs. Hillary in "The Senator," a part that she acted with great vivacity, although she was handicapped by her youth, which prevented her from looking the character. She assumed the comedy leads in all the successful Daly plays, such as "The Last Word," "The Railroad of Love," "7-20-8," "Nancy & Co.," "The Great Unknown," "The International

Match," and "Transit of Leo," and also appeared in "Sweet Lavender" and "Captain Swift." Her first emotional part was Phyllis in "The Charity Ball," and it was followed with leading rôles in "The Wife," "In Spite of All," "The Dancing Girl," "An Enemy of the King," and "A Doll's House." Her Nora was a great triumph, and attracted wide attention, for "A Doll's House" was the first Ibsen play to be presented on the Pacific Coast.

In January, 1898, Miss Bates came under Augustin Daly's management, and played Shakespearian characters in his company until the end of the season, when she was loaned to Mr. Frawley, with whom she starred throughout the West. She returned to Mr. Daly to create in this country the character of the Countess Mirtza in "The Great Ruby," her first heavy part. She appeared in the rôle but twice, and her unexpected withdrawal from the Daly company gave rise

to any amount of gossip. Her success with James O'Neill followed. During the early part of last summer she was again with Mr. Frawley, this time appearing with his stock company in Washington. Regarding her work in "The Great Ruby," Norman Hapgood wrote: "Blanche Bates, by moderate, clear, and vivid acting, made the countess thief a fascinating person. This actress will be watched with interest in her New York career." Franklyn Fyles said: "A new one, Blanche Bates, distinguished herself by marked cleverness in the rôle of an adventuress. She is a handsome and accomplished actress."

CHAPTER XXIII.

ELSIE DEWOLFE.

When Mrs. James Brown Potter became a professional actress, thus resigning the leadership in New York amateur theatricals, which she had held for many years, the person that quietly slipped into the position was Elsie Anderson DeWolfe. Miss DeWolfe's career as an amateur actress was unusual enough to be worth recording. Her first important appearance was in 1885 at Charles Wyndham's Criterion Theatre in London, when she acted in Douglas Jerrold's comedy, "The White Milliner." The performance was for the benefit of some church charity, and the Prince and Princess of Wales were

among those present. The play was repeated a little later for the benefit of the wives of the soldiers killed in the Soudan. On her return home to New York from her London visit Miss DeWolfe acted at Mrs. Eggleston's residence in Washington Square, in a play called "The Loan of a Lover." She then appeared at the University Club Theatre in a drama entitled "Fête de la St. Martin." Even in those days, when any idea of the professional stage would have seemed the height of absurdity, Miss DeWolfe was a diligent student of the art of acting, and conscientious to a surprising degree in the preparation of her characters. She was thoroughly at home on the stage, and she had repose, a most uncommon quality among amateur actors.

In the spring of 1886 Miss DeWolfe made a great hit as Lady Clara Seymore in S. Theyre Smith's one-act play, "A Cup of Tea," which was given at the University

Club Theatre under the auspices of the Amateur Comedy Club. Her "fall" in this piece was a nine days' wonder in the fashionable world. In the autumn of the same year she again played Lady Clara, this time at the opening of the Tuxedo Club Theatre. Next she appeared as Maud Ashley in a dull play called "Sunshine." This performance was given by the Amateur Comedy Club in the assembly-rooms of the Metropolitan Opera House. A few weeks later, during carnival week at Tuxedo, Miss DeWolfe acted Lady Gwendoline Bloomfield in Sir Charles Young's "Drifted Apart" and Helen in the comedy scenes from Sheridan Knowles's drama, "The Hunchback." These plays were afterward repeated in New York. Lady Gwendoline was a type of the cold, heartless woman of society. As the play progressed, Lady Gwendoline's womanly nature was developed, and the rôle became one requiring considerable emotional power. Miss

DeWolfe was very good in the early scenes, but naturally enough she was hardly equal to realising the full possibilities of the last half of the play. Her performance of Helen was much better, and the coquetry and archness of the character were displayed with fine effect. She acted Helen eight times that winter, and each time showed great improvement, with the result that as an amateur actress she was without an equal, and judged by the professional standard she ranked only a trifle beneath the general average. Miss DeWolfe's connection with amateur theatricals continued until she became a professional actress in 1891, and her most successful parts were Mrs. Prettifet in "The Mousetrap," Rosina Vokes's famous character in Mrs. Charles A. Doremus's bright comedietta, "The Circus Rider," Lady Teazle in Richard Brinsley Sheridan's "The School for Scandal," and the leading rôle in "Contrasts," an adaptation by Miss Elizabeth Mar-

bury of "Je dine chez ma mère." In this last drama, which was one of the most elaborate amateur productions ever made in New York, Miss DeWolfe had the advantage of Mr. David Belasco's instruction. She had also during her visits abroad constantly studied under leading dramatic artists, among them Mlle. Bartet, Herman Vezin, and Mlle. Marie Laurent.

Elsie DeWolfe was the daughter of the late Dr. Stephen DeWolfe, of New York, and was born in New York City on December 20, 1865. Her father died in 1890, and after his estate had been settled Miss DeWolfe found that she would be obliged to earn a livelihood. Her tastes and her training led her to choose the stage, and she succeeded in getting an engagement with Charles Frohman, under whose management she has remained most of the time since. Her professional début was made at Proctor's Theatre, New York, on October 5, 1891, in

Victorien Sardou's "Thermidor," in which she assumed the leading emotional rôle, Fabienne Lecoulteur. She prepared herself with great care for the part, going abroad and studying it in French under the direction of Sardou himself and with the aid of her former tutor, Mlle. Bartet, who created the character at the stormy production of the play in Paris. Under Mlle. Bartet's coaching, Miss DeWolfe gained wonderfully in emotional power. When the play was produced in New York, however, Miss DeWolfe was not a success, though later she retrieved herself, and in Boston achieved a genuine triumph. She has always ascribed her New York failure largely to her ignorance of the art of making-up. "I looked a perfect fright on the first night," she said, "more like a circus clown than a woman, and even my own friends did not recognise me when I came on the stage."

While working with Sardou Miss DeWolfe

became a great admirer of the French dramatist, regarding whom shè said:

"To me he is little short of a demigod. He seems to know everything. You hunt up a subject and go to him with it. He knows all, and more than you can tell him. His erudition is perfectly appalling, and yet he is so simple, and his life is so quiet and so beautiful.

"I attended all the rehearsals of 'Thermidor' at the Comédie Française," she continued, "the first outsider ever accorded such a privilege, and from that time until I came back, to make my own début, I literally sat in Sardou's pocket, that is, when I was not vibrating between him and Mlle. Bartet. Yes, I was there in Sardou's box, the Saturday night the play was produced, and with a party of friends on that dreadful second night, when Lissagaray led the mob and flung things at Coquelin, and Sardou sat quietly in his box and smiled

at the tumult. Was I frightened? Indeed, and indeed, I was. I never expected to get out alive; I knew we should be stoned to death.

"Sardou," Miss DeWolfe added, "is the best hated man in France, and he loves it! He often says that, if the day comes that sees his countrymen own that he has produced anything great, he shall know that he has reached the end of his career."

After her appearance in "Thermidor," Miss DeWolfe spent two seasons on the road, acting leading parts in "Joseph," "Judge," and "The Four-in-Hand." Returning to New York she played at the American Theatre in "Sister Mary," her character being Rose Reade. Then she was enrolled as a member of the Empire Theatre Company of New York. She assumed with distinction such parts as Lady Kate Ffennel in "The Bauble Shop," with the John Drew Company, Lady Charley Wishanger in "The

Masqueraders," Mrs. Wanklyn in "John-a-Dreams," Mrs. Glib in "Christopher Jr.," Mrs. Mellin Dale in "A Man in Love," Leah da Costa in "A Woman's Reason," and Mrs. Dudley Chumleigh in "Marriage."

Last season Miss DeWolfe was a prominent member of the famous cast that presented Henri Lavedan's "Catherine" in this country. Her Helene was in some respects the most remarkable characterisation in the play. The rôle itself was one of much difficulty, combining as it did the fiercest passion and the refinement of a woman of gentle birth and social position. Miss DeWolfe revealed a depth of emotion heretofore unsuspected in her, and her appeal to men was tremendous. Her acting was realistic in the extreme, quiet and subdued, marvellously simple, yet marvellously complex in the motives suggested. Her audacious appeal to the man she loved thrilled one and set the nerves to tingling as if from an electric

shock. A magnificent creature, this Helene, a woman to serve twice seven years for, even as Jacob served for Rachel!

Miss DeWolfe's future is surely one of roseate hue. Her talent is unquestionably great, and her position on the American stage is sufficiently advanced to give her abilities excellent scope. Moreover, she has, in addition to a thorough stage training, the great advantage of having known society life at first hand. Intelligent, ambitious, and a hard worker; personally magnetic and physically attractive; her face constantly charming with its wealth of varying expression, and her voice equally fascinating with its melody and delicate modulations, she should find in the modern realistic drama a field in which to prosper and to win artistic triumphs.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ROSE COGHLAN.

Rose Coghlan is an actress whom the critics praise mightily, but whom the public, outside of New York City, where she has a large personal following, who bear in mind her triumphs with Lester Wallack, has not appreciated at her full worth. Indeed, the public really knows very little about her, and this notwithstanding the fact that she has won approbation time and time again, — nay more, has compelled admiration in rôles with which no actress in the country, unless it be Agnes Booth, of whom, for some reason or other, she always reminds me, could have begun to make the impression that Miss Coghlan did. Miss Coghlan

has been neglected, because, while she has as an actress moved the public emotionally and intellectually, she has never succeeded in touching the public's heart with a sense of her personal charm, has never succeeded in winning the public's love, if I may express it in that way. Consequently, she has never created in the public mind a tremendous desire to see her on the stage regardless of the play in which she appears. Maude Adams and Julia Marlowe are the two persons that have inspired to the greatest degree just such personal idolatry, yet neither of them can approach Rose Coghlan in genuine tragic force; neither of them, for instance, can portray as she can the woman who loves mightily, hates bitterly, and, like a wild beast at bay, fights to the last ditch. But they have in superabundance that little gift of individuality, which means so much to the player, personal magnetism. Every actor must have an appreciable amount of this

most desirable quality to succeed at all; a few — and they are fortunate beings, born with silver spoons in their mouths — have far more than their share, and they prosper accordingly.

Rose Coghlan, magnificent dramatic artist though she is, is surely lacking somewhat in personal magnetism. She has been acting prominent parts in conspicuous productions in this country continuously for over twenty years; she has always shown a fine average ability, and some things she has done extraordinarily well; she is a woman of superb stage presence, and she is at that age when she should be at the very height of her power in characters that call for the display of the deeper and the gloomier emotions. Yet where do we find her? Playing an adventuress in an unusually lurid and sensational melodrama, and even occasionally appearing in vaudeville. Do not misunderstand me. I am not blaming Miss Coghlan;

I am simply outlining a condition and trying to give an explanation. Miss Coghlan probably hates being in melodrama very much more than we hate to see her there. If any one is to be blamed, it is the public that has failed to appreciate an artist. Or, better still, if you must blame some one or something, and do not think it profitable nor wise to censure a public that, after all, only follows its instincts, why, blame nature. At any rate she can't answer back!

Rose Coghlan was born in Peterborough, England, in 1853, and came from a prominent Irish family. Her father was Francis Coghlan, the founder of Coghlan's Continental Dispatch, the publisher of Coghlan's Continental Guides, and the friend of Charles Dickens, Charles Reade, and other literary men of his time. The first wife of Rose's brother Charles was an actress. She got Charles, who was a lawyer when he married, on the stage, and later she did the same

thing for Rose. Rose made her professional début in Greenwich, Scotland, as one of the witches in "Macbeth." Soon after she had a chance to play in London, and made quite a hit as Tilly Price in a dramatisation of Dickens's "Nicholas Nickleby," at the Court Theatre, where she was also successful in various boys' parts. Engagements with Adelaide Neilson and John L. Toole followed, and then in 1871 E. A. Sothern brought her to this country to appear in a dramatisation of Wilkie Collins's novel "The Woman in White." The management collapsed, and Miss Coghlan sought refuge with Lydia Thompson's famous blonde burlesquers. She was then at Wallack's Theatre one season, and in 1873 returned to England, playing for a short time with Charles Mathews in "The Liar." Miss Coghlan's next venture was in the provinces, being engaged for utility rôles by Mr. Loveday, of the Theatre Royal, Cheltenham. Genevieve Roberts was the

leading lady of the company. She was a good actress, but a woman of fiery temper. During a "Macbeth" rehearsal she quarrelled with Albert Sydney, the stage manager, and threw up her engagement. Miss Coghlan was rushed in at short notice to play Lady Macbeth, and made such a hit that she was permanently engaged for leading business. How this promising engagement came to an abrupt termination is thus related by Miss Coghlan:

"The amount of hard work that I had to do was simply astonishing. I would come home at night, light my candle in the hallway below, go to my room, and study over a part until I could no longer see. Then when my brain seemed to give out and every letter and character in the book seemed like tiny specks, a multitudinous number, I would set my teapot over the flame and drink the tea as warm or hot as I could get it. Then I would begin to work and worry over my

gowns, and so with studying, cutting, and fitting, it was often daylight before I was able to take a much needed rest. The work was extremely hard, and I often felt discouraged, and decided to give it up.

"Eventually I did make a change, and I don't believe any one will blame me for it when they learn how it came about. Mr. Barry Sullivan was at that time playing in London, and negotiations had been going on for some time to have him appear with us at Cheltenham for a week's engagement. After Mr. Loveday completed the arrangements, a 'call' was posted for a week of Shakespeare. I had never seen any of these plays, and although I had what we term a quick memory, I knew I would never be able to commit Shakespeare's lines on such a short notice. I sent for Mr. Loveday, and told him that it would be impossible for me to appear with Mr. Sullivan, and that he would have to get some one to take my place. He argued with

me until I consented to try. That night I did not go to bed at all, but, try as I would, I could not memorise the lines of Portia. My brain was tired out and I knew I must have a rest. But could I tell Mr. Loveday? And the company, when they heard of it, wouldn't they laugh at and make fun of me? I will run away, I said, and so I did.

"Within a few miles of Cheltenham there was an old friend of my mother's, and frequently she begged me to visit her, but my work made this impossible. In my despair I decided to go to her, and hurriedly packing my trunk, I engaged a carriage, and before the sun sank in the west on that bright Sabbath day I was enjoying all the comforts of home."

Miss Coghlan did play Shakespeare with Barry Sullivan later, however, after she had finished out the season with Mr. John Hare. Besides other characters, with Sullivan she acted Viola in "Twelfth Night" over two

hundred times. She was in the cast that first played "East Lynne" at St. James's Theatre, London, and after that was the Lady Manden in Herman Merivale's great success, "All for Her," which ran for four hundred nights at the same theatre.

In 1877 Miss Coghlan again became a member of Lester Wallack's New York company, this time as leading lady. Her first rôle was Clarisse Harlowe in Dion Boucicault's stupid play of the same name. She remained with Wallack nine years, with the exception of a short engagement in San Francisco and another at Booth's Theatre, New York, in a Boucicault play called "The Rescue." Miss Coghlan made her most brilliant success at Wallack's as Stephanie in Merivale's "Forget-Me-Not," forestalling accidentally Genevieve Ward, who expected to introduce this play into this country.

"You see," said Miss Coghlan, "there was a delightful misreading of Miss Ward's

contract with the author, and, under a misconception, Mr. Merivale sold the New York rights to Theodore Morse, of Wallack's, so that when Genevieve Ward arrived at quarantine to tour this country, she had the pleasure of reading, while detained there, the criticisms on my performance of the part that was her own, — I had played it the night before, and made the hit of my life. Of course she easily got an injunction, but I had played it; great part, too, though an adventuress never gets the full sympathy of the audience, however clever she is."

Miss Coghlan once remarked that of all the characters that she has ever assumed she likes best of all Rosalind in "As You Like It;" next Peg Woffington, in which, by the way, she was very fine, and after that Stephanie.

After "Forget-Me-Not" had been ruled out at Wallack's, Miss Coghlan originated the leading rôle in "La Belle Russe," an

imitation of the Merivale play. Notable successes, such as "The World," "A Scrap of Paper," "The Silver King," "The Lyons Mail," and "Moths," followed, as well as brilliant revivals of the old comedies. Her connection with the theatre ended in 1886, but when Wallack's closed its doors on May 5, 1888, the last performance being "The School for Scandal," Miss Coghlan was especially engaged for Lady Teazle.

Miss Coghlan appeared with the Union Square Theatre Company in 1887, acting Lady Gay Spanker, Peg Woffington, Rosalind, and Zicka in "Diplomacy," a remarkable performance. She was the Player Queen in the star cast of "Hamlet," which was produced in New York, May 21, 1888, in honour of Lester Wallack's retirement from the stage. That fall Miss Coghlan started out as a star, her first play being her brother Charles's "Jocelyn." Productions of "Princess Olga" and "The Idol of the Hour"

followed. Then she tried her hand, without much success, at farcical comedy, from which she emerged, in 1894, with the Oscar Wilde sensation, "A Woman of No Importance." The next year she starred in "Princess Walanoff," "Diplomacy," and "Forget-Me-Not." Since that time Miss Coghlan has drifted. Yet she is an actress of the rarest accomplishments, a type of player of which there are but few, and she must soon stand forth from her comparative obscurity.

CHAPTER XXV.

MARGARET ANGLIN.

MARGARET ANGLIN had been on the stage but four years when she was engaged at the beginning of last season to play Roxane in Richard Mansfield's production of "Cyrano de Bergerac." This character, which she acted with unusual artistic taste, brought her prominently before the public. Roxane is by no means a great part. She is completely overbalanced by Cyrano, a fact Miss Anglin fully appreciated. She never unduly forced herself into the picture; she invested the rôle with much charm and fascination, and she was dainty, coquettish, and lovely to the eye. Her best moment came with her declaration of love for Cyrano in

the last act, when her pathos and sincerity were very touching.

Miss Anglin is a Canadian girl. She was born in Ottawa in 1876, while her father was Speaker of the House of Commons. In this connection a peculiar interest attaches itself to Miss Anglin's birth, for that important event in her life occurred in the Speaker's Chamber of the House of Parliament. Her youth was passed in a French convent school, and at the age of seventeen she decided to study for the stage. She entered Nelson Wheatcroft's school in New York, and while there appeared in two plays, which were given at matinée performances by the students. Her professional début was made in the fall of 1894, at the Academy of Music in New York, in a small part in "Shenandoah," then under Charles Frohman's management. The next season was spent on the road with a company of barnstormers. The repertory was varied, as

well as the conditions under which the actors laboured, and Miss Anglin declared that she gained enough stock work experience in that one engagement to last her a lifetime.

The season of 1896–97 found Miss Anglin a member of James O'Neill's company, with which she played Ophelia in "Hamlet," Virginia in "Virginius," Julie de Mortemar in "Richelieu," and Mercedes in "Monte Cristo." When the next season opened she acted in "Lord Chumley" with E. H. Sothern, being given the part of Meg, the "slavey," which was originated by Etta Hawkins. Then she organised a company of her own and played throughout the lower provinces of Canada. In her repertory were "As You Like It," in which, of course, she was the Rosalind, "Christopher Jr.," and "The Mysterious Mr. Bugle." Miss Anglin remained with Mr. Mansfield until March, 1899, when she joined James O'Neill and appeared in his production of "The Musketeers."

CHAPTER XXVI.

FAY DAVIS.

Fay Davis is an American actress who has never acted in America. All her theatrical successes have been accomplished in England, where for a number of seasons she has been one of the features of the companies of Charles Wyndham and George Alexander. In this country we know her only as a very beautiful girl, tall, slender, and graceful, and as an unusually accomplished reader. Miss Davis was born in Houlton, Me., in December, 1869. Her parents took her to Boston when she was a little girl, and she grew up in that city, graduating from the Winthrop School. She attended several schools of oratory in Boston, but they did not

seem to give her exactly what she wanted, so she placed herself under the tutelage of Leland T. Powers, the monologue entertainer, and she was also coached by Prof. J. J. Hayes, of Harvard University. For several seasons Miss Davis was prominent in lyceum course entertainments throughout the country, and she was also connected with several amateur theatrical organisations in Boston. But during her residence in that city apparently no thought of the professional stage ever entered her mind.

In May, 1895, Miss Davis and her sister, Mrs. F. M. Linnell, of Boston, went to London for a visit. One afternoon, in the studio of Felix Moscheles, she was invited to entertain the artist's friends. She gave two or three selections, and her success was immediate. Usually when a recitation is announced the crowd speedily thins. But when Miss Davis recited, persons crowded in the room, blocked up the doors, and even

stood on the chairs. They asked, "Who is she?" When they were told that she was an American reciter, they said, "Surely she is an actress, or should be one." She was asked to recite in many places. Mrs. Ronalds, Madame Nordica, and Mrs. Kendall did much to advance her interests, and Felix Moscheles gave another brilliant reception in her honour. Then when Henry Lorraine, the veteran English actor, was given a benefit at the Criterion, Charles Wyndham's theatre, Miss Davis was asked to read.

"I was sitting in the balcony," said Mrs. Linnell, in telling the story, "and Mr. Wyndham was sitting beside me. We had met him before, but he had never heard Fay recite. While she was speaking, he turned to me, and said, 'Would your sister go on the stage?' I said I did not know, but that I had advised her to do so. He said, 'If she will, I want her. I am going down to see her now.' This he did. He

had a new play, in which he wanted her to take the part of an American girl. She said she would read over the part and decide. He sent her the manuscript of 'A Squire of Dames.' The part was that of Zoe Nuggetson, a Western girl. The part was written on the M'liss type, a rather rough exaggeration. After Fay had read it over, she sent the play back, and told Mr. Wyndham she couldn't do it. She said she had never seen any such girl, nor known of one, and she couldn't play the part. Upon that he said, 'Well, write the part over to suit yourself, then, and play it as you have a mind to.' This she eventually did, and achieved a remarkable success."

Miss Davis appeared as Zoe in November, 1895, and played the character all that season. At the close of the theatrical year she went to the Isle of Wight for a rest, and while there she was sent for by George Alexander, to take the rôle of Madame de

Mauban in "The Prisoner of Zenda." She appeared in that play for two months. Then she acted Celia in Mr. Alexander's production of "As You Like It," and after that came her great success as Fay Zuliana in "The Princess and the Butterfly." During the summer of 1897 she toured the provinces, playing the Princess Flavia in "The Prisoner of Zenda" and Rosalind in "As You Like It." On her return to London she created the character of Monica in "The Tree of Knowledge," and she also made a great hit as Dulcie Larondie in a revival of "The Masqueraders." Regarding this last performance, the *London Mail* said:

"When originally produced at the St. James's Theatre, there was one thrilling moment in the piece that dwarfed all others, — the game at cards. Now there are two, for Miss Fay Davis electrified the audience at the Grand Theatre by her delivery of the

tempestuous tirade against marriage and all its works. To those who know Miss Davis only as the sweet and sympathetic heroine, the passion and frenzy of this outbreak of a distraught and broken-hearted woman will come as a revelation. The very heart-strings of Dulcie Larondie seemed to snap, and the discord of overwrought anguish rang in our ears and impressed itself upon our brains. It was no theatrical *tour-de-force*, it was something immeasurably greater — a glimpse into the heart and mind of a real, living woman, in whom every emotion of maternity, of pride, of everything which makes up life, was agonised beyond endurance. By no trick or mere technical skill did Miss Fay Davis impel our sympathy — but by vivid truth and irresistible reality. She seemed to be swept away by the horror of it — and we were swept away, too. An actress who can play this strenuous scene as Miss Davis played it, and who can also give

to us the charm and strange pathos of the confession of the wild girl in 'The Princess and the Butterfly,' has a range and a versatility which should carry her anywhere."

Speaking of her sister's success, Mrs. Linnell said: "Fay is a very hard worker. She studies constantly. For instance, for the part of Fay Zuliana, which is that of an Italian girl who speaks broken English, she had an old Italian woman to teach her. She has studied with Genevieve Ward, who herself said to me, in speaking of Fay, 'I have lived in London for twenty-five years, and I have never seen such a success.'"

Miss Davis's début in "The Squire of Dames" was dramatic in the extreme. Before the play began she was practically unknown to the critics and the public. When the play ended, the theatre was ringing with her praises, and the next day she was the talk of all London. Zoe Nuggetson was not a leading part by any means, but Miss Davis

gave it distinction, and made it stand out with far more prominence than its actual importance demanded.

"There is one scene in this play which is worth seeing for the scene alone," Clement Scott wrote. "Mr. Wyndham, the careless butterfly man of the water, the bee that sucks the honey from every passing flower, has made a deep impression on a rich, natural, straightforward American girl. After flirting and coquetting, the pretty American comes straight to the point, and swears she will marry no man on earth but this delightful butterfly, this honey-sucking bee. In the scene there is not a trace of vulgarity. There is no suggestion of the stage Yankee girl about it. It is played to perfection by Mr. Wyndham and Miss Fay Davis, who was nearly encored for her nature and brilliancy. Properly considered, it is a most affecting little chapter of nature, and even now Miss Fay Davis may let herself go a little more.

She need not be afraid of that throb and tremble in the voice. The situation demands it, and every tear drawn here is to the credit of the general account. The scene in itself was a genuine bit of nature, but the acting called down the kind of enthusiasm that means so much when it is obviously sincere. The audience was, in fact, a little spoiled. Charles Wyndham, Frank Fento, Miss Fay Davis, and a few others had so brought back the old Gymnase style of 1864, that the lovers of acting began thinking of Rose Chere, and Delaport, and Farguell, and comedians of that incomparable style. For style is what these plays require."

Referring to this same scene, the *London Chronicle* said: "Miss Fay Davis sustained her share of this excellently written scene with exactly the amount of spirit and refinement that was required to convince the audience of the sincerity of Zoe. There was no hanging back, neither was the rush forward

too great. Excess in either direction might have spoiled all. The performance was admirably balanced throughout. As Zoe herself would probably have said, it was 'just right.'"

After Miss Davis's appearance in "The Prisoner of Zenda," Arthur Warren declared: "The change from pure comedy ('The Squire of Dames') to romantic melodrama was a severe test, but the success of the young artist was no less distinct in this instance than in the other. Miss Davis is an artist who thinks for herself. She has given clear proof that to whatever she touches she will bring a new light. Her predecessors in the De Mauban rôle had shown us an adventuress who was hard, vindictive, and, not to put too fine a point upon it, rather noisy. Miss Davis changed all this. In her hands Antoinette de Mauban was not an adventuress, but a beautiful, high-bred woman, a loving woman who risked all for the sake of

the man she loved, and who saved the king in order to save her lover from the crime of killing. The womanliness of this De Mauban was exquisitely portrayed. There was a rare, rich power, too, in the passionate scenes, and nothing more touching than her confession to the Princess Flavia has been seen on the London stage in many a day."

The London critics called Miss Davis's Celia in "As You Like It" "the new Celia." Miss Davis had the advantage of having all the lines in the part retained, and thus her character was not sacrificed for the purpose of making a "star" of Rosalind, who, in this case, was played by Julia Neilson. George Alexander was the Orlando.

"Miss Fay Davis exercises a charm all her own in the character of Celia," remarked the London *Times*. "Usually Celia is eclipsed by her more imposing companion, Rosalind. There has not for many years been seen so arch and graceful and interesting a Celia as

Miss Fay Davis presents; her acting is a revelation of the potentialities for the character which comes upon the habitual playgoer as a surprise."

The critic of the *Daily Mail* wrote: "There must go up one long cry of admiration for brilliant Miss Fay Davis. Poetry was in the heart as well as in the speech of her Celia, and, in facial and vocal play, her acting was the finest of the afternoon."

Last season Miss Davis impersonated Juliet Gainsborough, in George Alexander's productions of John Oliver Hobbes's brilliant comedy, "The Ambassador."

CHAPTER XXVII.

ODETTE TYLER.

ODETTE TYLER is a charming ingénue, who is best remembered by her dainty acting of Caroline Mittford in William Gillette's stirring drama, "Secret Service." Last season, however, after a year's retirement from the stage, she bloomed forth as a Shakespearian heroine, appearing as Desdemona in "Othello," Juliet in "Romeo and Juliet," and Portia in both "The Merchant of Venice" and "Julius Cæsar." After a preliminary run around the country, she boldly entered New York and played an engagement of several weeks' duration. The experiment was not half so disastrous as might have been expected, for the ambitious

actress was handicapped by a reputation that made the public unwilling to accept her as anything except a very young and rather frivolous girl, as well as a company that was as a whole decidedly inadequate, and stage settings that showed the wear and tear of many years of arduous service. While not accorded any overwhelming praise, Miss Tyler did win the respectful consideration of critical writers, and was given credit for dramatic ability much in excess of what she was generally believed to possess. There was pathos in her Desdemona, beauty in her Juliet, and dignity in her Portia in "The Merchant of Venice," and under the circumstances she had every reason to be pleased at the things that were said of her.

Miss Tyler's Caroline Mittford in "Secret Service" was a bird of altogether another colour. The character was that of a Southern girl not yet out of her teens, a provok-

ing maiden whose end in life seemed to be to get all the fun possible out of the passing moment. The fact that the Confederate cause was on the wane, and the Federal guns were pounding Richmond day and night, apparently did not trouble her one whit. A defeated South was not half so direful a disaster to contemplate as the fact that she could not have a new gown to wear at a coming party. But there was womanliness and courage in this miss, though they cropped out only at unexpected moments. She teased her boy lover unmercifully just before he left for the front, then cried as if her heart would break after he had gone; and it was her meddling, whether intentional or not I am sure I do not know, that saved the hero-spy when his schemes seemed to be on the point of falling like a house of cards about his head. A lovable little lady, indeed, as acted by Miss Tyler, and such a picture in her big

hat with its flowing ribbons! They said that the hat was an anachronism, but it was too pretty for any one really to care about its date.

Miss Tyler is a Southerner herself, and comes from a family with a magnificent army and navy record. She was born in Savannah, Georgia, the daughter of General Kirkland, a West Pointer, who fought for the lost cause. One of her uncles was General Hardee, the author of the famous Hardee military tactics, and another was Admiral Kirkland, who a few years ago was presented by the Czar of Russia with a ten thousand dollar snuff-box. Bessie Kirkland was Miss Tyler's name before she went on the stage. She is now married to R. D. MacLean, one of her co-stars in her last season's Shakespearian venture. Miss Tyler's first professional appearance was made in 1884 in "Sieba," one of the Kiralfy spectacles, and, although

she had only a few lines to speak, her beauty won for her considerable attention. She was next engaged by Daniel Frohman for the Madison Square Theatre Company, and made her début at that house in William Gillette's "The Private Secretary." At the conclusion of this engagement Mr. Frohman loaned her to Minnie Maddern, who was then starring, and Miss Tyler appeared as a French actress in "In Spite of All," and created the part of Euridice Mole in "Featherbrain," in which she made a decided success. Charles Frohman next secured her as leading comédienne of the Empire Theatre Company, with which she appeared as the young widow in love with the Congressman from Jersey in "Men and Women;" as Polly in "The Lost Paradise," making one of the greatest hits in the play when it was produced in Chicago; and as Lucy Hawksmith in "The Girl I Left Behind Me." She originated the leading

rôle in "The Gay Parisians," and created in this country the title rôle in "The Councillor's Wife," a character made famous in England by Mrs. John Woods. Miss Tyler also played Gertrude Ellingham in a revival of "Shenandoah" by Charles Frohman. She appeared in "Secret Service" in all the leading cities of this country, and was with the company during its successful visit to England.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

MARIE BURROUGHS.

MARIE BURROUGHS was born in San José, California, and her name was Lillie Arrington. When she was seventeen years old, she finished her education at the Convent of the Sacred Heart in San Francisco, and soon after she left school she went to the theatre for the first time. The performance was Lawrence Barrett in "Yorick's Love," and the young girl was immediately smitten with a desire to be an actress. That was, of course, quite the usual thing, but Miss Burroughs happened to have a friend who knew Mr. Barrett, and in this way she obtained an introduction to the actor and an opportunity to read before him.

"I do not think that the poor man wanted

to hear me at all," said Miss Burroughs, "but he was civil about it, although there was a meek and rather sad expression in his face, as if he were saying to himself, 'Another of them.' What did I read? Oh, I think the curse scene from 'Leah.' When it was over he was very civil again, but this time not as if he were bored. What he really thought may be judged from the fact that he wrote to New York about me in such terms that it was not long after that I had an offer to join the Madison Square Company, then under the Mallorys' management."

At that time "The Rajah" was being played by that company, and, as luck would have it, a week after Miss Burroughs's arrival in New York the leading lady was taken sick, and the novice was called upon to act Gladys, an emotional rôle of considerable power. The next play in which she took part was "Alpine Roses," and in this she acted Irene.

"With that part," Miss Burroughs remarked, "came my first sorrow. It came quickly, and I thought it was dreadful. I had originally been cast for an emotional part. I had studied it and wept over it, and I was intending to have such a beautifully dolorous time, when, imagine my grief! I was transferred to the comedy part. I was to play a light, frisky rôle in place of all my pretty heroics. Wasn't that tragic? Oh, I was like the rest. I was going right home. I did not want to act any at all if I could not act as I wanted to. But I was appeased and made a hit, and recollect what a company that was to make a hit in, — Richard Mansfield, W. J. LeMoyne, George Clarke, Georgia Cayvan, and Mrs. Whiffen."

After "Alpine Roses," Miss Burroughs went on the road with the company, appearing in the repertory that included "Hazel Kirke," "Esmeralda," and "After the Ball." The tour ended in New Orleans. Wallack's

company at that time was appearing throughout Texas and when the troupe was in Galveston, Sophie Eyre, who was acting leading parts, suddenly left it. Miss Burroughs was sent for, and at forty-eight hours' notice assumed the rôle of Zicka in "Diplomacy," and after that the leading part in "Lady Clare," the Wallack version of "Le Maître des Forges."

"That really was a great experience," Miss Burroughs commented. "Fancy at eighteen playing such a part as Zicka anyway, but playing it at forty-eight hours' notice. It was the divine courage of ignorance."

When she returned to New York, Miss Burroughs acted Pauline March when Robert Mantell appeared with Jessie Millward in Hugh Conway's "Called Back." Soon after A. M. Palmer took charge of the Madison Square Theatre, and Miss Burroughs became associated with the famous organisation identified with that house. She created the part of Queen Guinevere in "Elaine," with

Annie Russell as the Lily Maid of Astolat, and Alexander Salvini as Sir Launcelot. With Mr. Palmer Miss Burroughs first appeared in a play by Henry Arthur Jones, with whose heroines she was afterward so thoroughly identified when acting with E. S. Willard. The character that she played with the Palmer company was Lettie in "Saints and Sinners."

"Mr. Jones came to New York to rehearse 'Saints and Sinners,'" said Miss Burroughs, "and I have a picture of him on which he has written his name and 'To my Lettie.' I shall never forget that last rehearsal of 'Saints and Sinners.' It took place on the afternoon of the day of the first performance. It began at an early hour in the morning. It came to an abrupt end in the middle of the long afternoon, five hours and more later, with me in tears, Mr. Jones in a tantrum, and the whole company in disorder, and only the third act reached. What was the mat-

ter? Oh, nothing much, only the play had been rehearsed too much and we were all unstrung. The whole weight of it came on Mr. Stoddart and me, and every one was so anxious for me to do well. The stage manager was full of ideas about the part; Mr. Jones was in a similar condition; each member of the company had taken me aside and given me a point here and there and their opinion of how to do it, and, alas! I had a few ideas myself which I was hoping to get a chance to work in. That was the result. We dragged along miserably, until I broke down and began to cry, and then the men, of course, got the thing over as soon as possible, and the rehearsal was dismissed in despair. We had just time to eat and get back to the theatre and start the play, with the idea that we were momentarily approaching the place where the rehearsal stopped so summarily. As a matter of fact, the part we didn't rehearse went better than that which we did."

With Mr. Palmer Miss Burroughs also acted Florida in "A Foregone Conclusion," Marjory in "Marjory's Lovers," and appeared in "Partners," "Heart of Hearts," "Captain Swift," and other plays. In 1889 Miss Burroughs went to London and saw Mr. Willard in "The Middleman," though at that time she had no idea of playing with him in this country. Olga Brandon was engaged for the English actor's support in the United States, but at the last moment refused to leave London. Then Miss Burroughs got her opportunity, and her work with Mr. Willard added greatly to her reputation. During his successive tours she appeared as Mary Blenkern in "The Middleman," Vashti Dethic in "Judah," Kate Norbury in "John Needham's Double," the leading female character in "Wealth," Lucy in "The Professor's Love Story," and Ophelia in "Hamlet."

In the fall of 1894 Miss Burroughs started

out as a star, presenting for the first time in this country Arthur W. Pinero's drama, "The Profligate," and after that making productions of "Romeo and Juliet" and "Leah." In the spring of 1898 she was associated with Robert Hillard, and last season she appeared with Stuart Robson in Augustus Thomas's comedy, "The Meddler." While Miss Burroughs's starring venture showed that she hardly had sufficient power alone to carry a play to success, she is nevertheless one of the most thoroughly equipped and most satisfactory leading women that we have. She makes a strikingly beautiful picture on the stage; her face is one of much sweetness and her personality one of great charm. As Vashti in "Judah" she is at her best. It is an impersonation of great delicacy, winsomely tender and touchingly pathetic.

CHAPTER XXIX.

KATHRYN KIDDER.

KATHRYN KIDDER won her spurs in the fall of 1895 by her impersonation of the laundress and bourgeoise aristocrat in Sardou's "Madame Sans-Gêne," and her appearance in this rôle was a piece of brilliant audacity. When Sardou finished "Madame Sans-Gêne," he sent a copy of the play to his American agent with instructions to sell the rights to present the piece in this country for $5,000. Charles Frohman looked the drama over and did not like it; A. M. Palmer could find nothing in it to warrant him risking a production, and Augustin Daly also refused to have anything to do with it. So the manuscript drifted around, seeking a pur-

chaser, until by some chance or other it fell into Miss Kidder's hands. With superb courage she invested all her little capital in the comedy, and then began a weary hunt for a manager. She met with rebuffs everywhere, until Augustus Pitou finally consented to help her out. Her sweet revenge came when Réjane made her phenomenal success in the drama in Paris. Mr. Daly wanted a new play for Ada Rehan, and decided that "Madame Sans-Gêne" would just about fill the bill. Consequently Miss Kidder had the gratification of refusing an offer of $15,000 for the American rights of which she was the undisputed owner. Mr. Pitou gave the drama a magnificent production, and then Miss Kidder's triumph was complete.

Miss Kidder was born in Newark, New Jersey, and was the granddaughter of the Reverend D. P. Kidder, a prominent Newark divine. The old Kidder homestead was situated in the heart of the city, and was a quaint old

mansion, well remembered by the residents of Newark as one of the prettiest home spots of the place. Miss Kidder's beginnings on the stage were attended with difficulty, for, in addition to her own inexperience and lack of acquaintanceship in theatrical circles, she had to contend with the open hostility of her family. Her début was made in 1885, when she was seventeen years old, as Wanda in "Norbeck," a dramatisation by Frank Mayo from a German novel by Mrs. Werner, called "Vineta." Mr. Mayo hoped to repeat his Davy Crockett success with this play, which had a number of fine situations, but it hardly met his expectations, though he continued it in his repertory for several seasons. Miss Kidder stayed in Mr. Mayo's company about a year, and then acted in "Held by the Enemy" during its run at the Madison Square Theatre, New York. After that she went to Paris to study, and during the twelve months that followed she learned

fencing, stage dancing, and French, besides constantly attending the theatres, especially the Comédie Française.

On her return to this country she played Dearest in "Little Lord Fauntleroy," during the play's long stay in New York, and then went on the road with a "fly by night" company, of which Joseph Haworth was the leading man.

"I went out with the répertoire for experience, and I had it," said Miss Kidder. "We travelled to Texas and the far West, and wandered from the North to the South of the land. We played everything. Nothing was too tremendous for us to attempt, nothing too ambitious for us. The salary was poor, the exigencies of dress many, for I had to have all sorts of costumes, and the travel was hard, yet I count that one of the most valuable and happiest times of my career. I cannot say that I never knew fatigue, for I was often very heartily and

healthily tired, but I can say that I never knew that mental weariness that arises from the necessity of having night after night to re-dress, mentally, a part of which you have grown thoroughly tired, and yet must still play."

Miss Kidder came back to New York feeling that she had served her apprenticeship, and hoping that she might find a place in the theatrical world worthy of the ability that she knew she possessed. There seemed to be nothing for her, however, and again she went abroad for a second period of study. When she returned home this time she found "Madame Sans-Gêne" awaiting her.

"I worked eighteen months on 'Madame Sans-Gêne' before I produced it," she said. "After Réjane made her great hit in it, I went to Paris and saw the French production. I sat the play through seven times, not that I wished to or intended to give an imitation of Madame Réjane, but because

I wanted to master every detail of the business and the method of securing effects. I worked very hard in preparing the piece, and I worked with a perfect calmness that appalled my friends. I cannot say that I was exactly indifferent, but I do say that I became reconciled to any fate. If the play had failed or succeeded, it would have been all the same to me. You remember, perhaps, that universally people said that I could not play the part. Well, to this my mind was made up, — either way it settled my future. If I failed I should accept the fact that the career of a player was not my proper sphere, and if I succeeded I should keep on in the same spirit. I was anxious for the verdict, that was all, anxious that I might have a quiet conscience at least. That mood had such a strong hold on me that on the opening night I barely heard the applause, and when I read the morning papers with so much of praise and nothing of blame I wondered at

myself that I could not feel elated. It was simply the settling to me of a vexed problem in my own favour."

After her success with "Madame Sans-Gêne," which she continued to present for two seasons, Miss Kidder turned her attention to classic rôles, one of her noteworthy characters being Rosalind in "As You Like It." Last season she was a member of the Louis James-Kathryn Kidder-Frederick Warde combination, which was well received throughout the South and West in Shakespeare's plays and in several of the old comedies.

CHAPTER XXX.

HELENA MODJESKA.

HELENA MODJESKA, a Pole by birth and a dramatic artist of reputation in her own country before she left it in 1876 practically an exile, first acted in the United States in 1877 at San Francisco, having accomplished in nine months the great task of mastering the English language sufficiently for stage purposes. This feat was a characteristic achievement, which showed the indomitable will, the wonderful energy, and the mental capacity of this remarkable woman, who, during a theatrical career thirty-eight years in duration and world-wide in its triumphs, has always been identified with the serious drama, and has never, even amid dis-

couragement and misfortune, forsaken her artistic ideal. Modjeska loves her art, and she delights to exercise it in congenial surroundings. She was for many years a tragic actress of unusual power, but of late years her acting has lost somewhat in force. She retains, however, much of her delightful personal charm, and the delicacy of her work, its dignity, refinement, pathos, and tenderness are still noteworthy. As a student she is entitled to a foremost place among actresses. She follows the uncommon method of approaching her characters — especially her Shakespearian characters — from the standpoint of the critic rather than from that of the histrion; she views them intellectually instead of emotionally; her first question is, What does it mean? and not, How shall I express it?

Modjeska illustrates excellently well how far separated are the tragic actress and the emotional actress, using emotion in its modern

stage sense as applied to such parts as Marguerite Gauthier in "Camille." It has been many times proved that, while a tragic actress can successfully act the semi-hysterical Marguerite Gauthier, an actress whose only claim to attention lies in her effectiveness in emotional rôles finds herself lost in the environment of the poetic drama. The purely emotional requires only the dramatic instinct, coupled, of course, with adequate stage experience; poetry, on the other hand, requires, in addition to dramatic instinct and stage experience, intellectual appreciation and grasp of the character assumed as a whole. Now, the modern actress who is emotional by training —or rather because of lack of training—cannot see a character as a whole, and she fails in the poetic drama, not because she cannot grasp the significance of poetry, but because she has never been taught properly to study and assimilate a character. Accustomed to the weak character-drawing and

overwhelming incident of the modern drama, she has formed the habit of working up her part by piecemeal, and not only has she not trained herself, she absolutely does not know what it means, to present a conception that in the first act fully and logically comprehends the last act. Modjeska, some time ago, vividly expressed the idea as follows:

"I never undertake a rôle unless I can see it before me. The idea in my mind must stand out before me so that I can see it, look at it. It must be an impersonation, a presence, and unless I can see it so I will not play it. I have tried to study Lady Macbeth, but I cannot see her yet. I do not bring her before me nor do I see how she would act and look, and until I do I will never try to play her. A character must prefigure itself before me before I grasp it, and when it does not I wait."

"Do you find that you can analyse your success?" she was asked. "That is, when the

spell is perfect can you tell why it is so, or what has produced the perfection of artistic illusion?"

"Never," she returned. "I have been ill and played better than I ever did before. Then I have been ill and not played well. So it is with playing when I was well. I cannot say that I have succeeded to-night because I was well or ill, or happy, or anxious, or satisfied. The combination of subtle elements that unite to produce that intangible and indefinable thing we name success is something I cannot grasp nor define, for it is in the spiritual conditions. Now Mr. Jefferson has what he calls his 'demon,' and if his demon is not with him he cannot play well. I call mine my angel, and I say unless my angel is with me I cannot play to-night."

Modjeska's theatrical life in America is closely interwoven with that of Edwin Booth, whom she so much resembles in the matter of poetic temperament. It was Booth who

encouraged her to try her fortune in this country. In 1876 Modjeska, who was then striving to make both ends meet in an experimental Polish colony in California, first saw Booth play. She was anxious to act with him then, but she could not speak English. Friends proposed that she give Ophelia in French to Booth's Hamlet in English, but Booth was not willing to sacrifice the time for rehearsals that such a venture would require. He did, however, consent to a private reading by Modjeska, who gave in French scenes from Corneille, Racine, and Dumas. The "Medae" recitation in "Adrienne Lecouvreur" was among her efforts, and also a scene from "Camille." From Schiller's "Robbers" a declamation in German was made, and in Polish a fine poem, — "Hagar in the Wilderness."

Booth was so impressed with her evident genius that he advised her to study English. Nine months later she presented "Adrienne

Lecouvreur," the play with which nine years before she had conquered the prejudices of Warsaw, in San Francisco, and was enthusiastically received. Modjeska's first appearance on the same stage with Booth was on April 30, 1883, when she acted Juliet to his Romeo, at the closing of the unfortunate Booth's Theatre in New York. On May 21, 1888, when "Hamlet" was given with a great star cast for Lester Wallack's benefit, Booth appearing as Hamlet, and Joseph Jefferson and William Florence as the two grave-diggers, Modjeska was the Ophelia. The next year she became associated with Booth in a starring tour.

Modjeska was born in Cracow, Poland, at the time of Poland's troubles with Austria. Her father, Michael Opido, was a Tatra mountaineer, and a man of much natural refinement, fond of art and music. Modjeska's first recollection is a peculiar incident connected with her father's death. Michael

Opido caught cold while attending a sick friend, and, accompanied by one of his sons, went to the mountains to recuperate. A few days after his departure the mother and children were sitting together when, without any knock or announcement, a peasant woman entered the room. She took no notice of the family, but walked straight across the room to another door, her head bowed, her hands crossed on her breast. Madame Opido started up. "What do you want?" she cried, but got no answer. The apartment had but one entrance, and the room which the peasant woman approached had no other door but the one by which she could enter. "Do not go there," cried Madame Opido, "there is no way out but this." The woman took no notice, but went through the doorway. Madame Opido rushed after her, but she was not there — she had vanished. "Did you not see her?" she asked of the children. "Where has she gone?" None of the chil-

dren had seen her except Helena. Madame Opido remembered, now that the vision had passed, that the woman wore the peasant dress of the mountaineers; all day long she wept bitterly, expecting to hear some terrible news of her husband, and on the morrow came the intelligence that he had died at the very hour when this apparition of the peasant had visited the family.

After her father's death, Modjeska's earliest remembrance of her childhood is that of seeing a man shot in the street. There was a great scream outside the house; the children all ran to see what it could be, and, as they rushed out, saw the blood flow from the wound. They were familiar with the sights and sounds of fighting; and Modjeska can well remember hiding behind a wall to pick up shot and gather it in her pinafore.

When Modjeska was seven years old she was taken to the theatre for the first time, and the experience so excited her that her

mother declared that she should never go again. Consequently, she was fourteen years old before she got a second sight of the inside of a playhouse, although in the meantime two of her brothers had become actors. The play was "Hamlet," acted by Fritz Devrient, and from that time dated Modjeska's fondness for Shakespeare. She was married to her guardian, Modrzejewski (from which comes Modjeska), when she was seventeen years old, and her husband aided her in her ambition to be an actress by organising a small travelling company. It was quite a family affair, being composed of herself, her husband, who was manager, her sister and her sister's husband, and three of her brothers. Modjeska's wardrobe consisted of two dresses, a white one for comedy and a black one for tragedy. Modjeska's husband died shortly after this, and for several years she acted in various theatres, in small Polish towns. In 1865 she returned to her native Cracow to

play leading parts in the theatre there, with which her half-brother, Felix Benda, was also connected. Soon her fame spread all over Poland, and she even received proposals to appear in France and Germany. Alexander Dumas, *fils*, invited her to come to Paris and play Marguerite Gauthier and other of his characters, but she refused to leave Poland. In 1868 Modjeska was married to Charles Chlapowski, Count Bozenta, and immediately after came her great triumph in Warsaw.

It is a curious fact that Modjeska's first engagement at the Warsaw Theatre was the result of an American innovation, Count Monkhanoff, the new manager, being desirous of infusing new life into the slow-going establishment, engaging her for twelve performances, on terms similar to those of a regular star engagement. This was the innovation against which the majority of the members of the Warsaw Theatre conspired, and, to effect their purposes, an attack was

made on the new actress by the leading journal of the city, the chief editor of which was the husband of the principal tragedienne of the theatre. Though other papers condemned the attack as unjustifiable, it depressed the spirits of Modjeska, while increasing the public interest in her début. At her first rehearsal some of her opponents in the company persuaded her to select "Adrienne Lecouvreur" for her first public appearance, as they thought she would certainly fail in it. By the advice of an old friend, she acted very poorly at the rehearsal of "Adrienne," and a few days before her public appearance in the part the wife of the editor who had attacked her took her place, through the influence of the cabal, in the absence of the president of the company from Warsaw. The object of the substitute was to take off the prestige of novelty from the play, and crush by comparison the new actress. But the poor acting of her enemy

encouraged Modjeska, and, although attacked by a terrible stage fright at the beginning, she ended by having a complete success, which was crowned by the congratulations of the great actors of the company, and the unanimous plaudits of the press.

The next year Modjeska was permanently engaged by the Warsaw Theatre, and remained there until political difficulties compelled her and her husband to leave Poland. After her successful début in San Francisco, Modjeska played in the United States for two seasons, and then, after a short visit to Poland, she made her first appearance in London, in 1880. She acted in "Mary Stuart," "The Old Love and the New," "Romeo and Juliet," "Adrienne Lecouvreur," and "Heartease," a version of "Camille." She played continuously for a year in the English metropolis, where her work was much admired.

Since then Modjeska has passed most of

her time in this country, and her theatrical career has been one of continued triumph. In January, 1895, while playing in Cincinnati, she was taken seriously ill, and compelled to retire from the stage for three years, which period was passed on her ranch in California. Last season she successfully toured the country, repeating many of her best known characters, and, in addition, producing Shakespeare's "Anthony and Cleopatra," regarding which the critic of the *Brooklyn Eagle* wrote:

"Her Cleopatra is a creature of passion, confident in the variety of her arts to charm, and unscrupulous in the use of them, but, withal, a woman not wholly depraved, and one who comes to love Anthony with the full strength of a woman's soul, and to grieve for him dead as deeply as she ever sighed for him living. The high points of the performance are the pathos of her grief over Anthony's body, and the classic, sculptural beauty of her

own death, in which the economy of means to the result produced was the very acme of technical artistic excellence. But, like Modjeska's other characters, her Cleopatra is not to be judged by any single scene. It is the exquisite harmony, and the proportion of all her scenes to each other, which places her upon a higher plane than actors who have more power in single moments. In her early scenes of cajolery with Anthony, she shows much of the diversity and charm which mark the forest scenes of her Rosalind, with craft substituted for Rosalind's innocent gaiety. The variety and beauty of the early part of the scene upon the terrace, where she mourns for Anthony, absent in Rome, are matchless. When the news of his marriage to Octavia comes, there is a Bernhardtesque fierceness about her treatment of the messenger. The wrath is clearly prescribed by Shakespeare; it gives variety to her Cleopatra, and it is theatrically effective, but to

one observer, at least, it seemed less excellent than almost any large scene in the play; perhaps because it is so obvious and easy, and Modjeska ordinarily scorns obvious things, and emphasises the more obscure side of her characters. The calm contempt and utter absence of fear with which she received the reproaches of Anthony were admirable, and the queenly confidence with which she approached him once more to try her blandishments was superb. In that movement spoke the 'proud ruler of a hundred kings.'"

Modjeska's Shakespearian repertory includes Beatrice, Cleopatra, Imogen, Juliet, Lady Macbeth, Portia, Ophelia, Rosalind, and Viola. Outside of Shakespeare there is her great part, Adrienne Lecouvreur, besides Andrea in "Prince Zillah," Camille, Donna Diana, Julie de Mortemar in "Richelieu," Gilberte in "Frou-Frou," Magda, which she created in this country, Mary Stuart,

"Nadjezda," Nora in Ibsen's "A Doll's House," Countess Von Lexon in "Daniela," Louise Greville in "The Tragic Mask," and Marie de Verneuil in "Les Chouans."

CHAPTER XXXI.

MAY ROBSON.

MAY ROBSON is that rarest thing among women, a genuine eccentric comedy actress. I do not recall at this moment that she has ever shown her own face, which, by the way, is a very pretty one, on the stage, and she has no hesitancy whatever about making herself as ugly or as ridiculous as grease paint, comical wigs, and outlandish costumes will admit. The types that she caricatures are widely differentiated, and her invention in the line of character parts apparently has no limitations. Of course, she burlesques beyond all reason, but to burlesque is the common failing of all eccentric comedians, who naturally think more of a laugh than

they do of an artistic impersonation. Miss Robson, however, is funny enough to be forgiven, and her characters, moreover, have the saving grace of originality, for she never imitates.

Her last "study" was with "Lord and Lady Algy," at the Empire Theatre, New York, and the appearance of the old fright of a mother at the fancy dress ball in the second act, costumed as a shepherdess "after Sir Joshua Reynolds," was one of the most laughable entrances imaginable. Previous to that, she played Poulette in "The Conquerors," and this, besides being a character study, was to a degree a study in character. Poulette was a French grisette, who had grown old in the service, whose physical attractiveness had faded, and whose mind was vacuity. Miss Robson might have tried to make the creature pathetic, in which case she would probably have only succeeded in making her disgusting. She chose the sim-

pler and safer course, and her Poulette, with her chalked and rouged face, her high penciled eyebrows, and her kittenish manner, was comical.

"What the brush is to the artist," said Miss Robson, in describing how she makes up, "make-up is to the actor. I cannot act without it. How do I put it on? Mix it with brains, as Sir Joshua Reynolds said. Observe, watch, experiment; that's the way. You often hear young actresses complaining that they can't understand how the veterans in the business get such perfect make-ups. By observing, that's how; not on the stage, but in the street, in street cars, elevated cars, — everywhere. The born actress is always seeing types. She stores them away in her memory for future use. Why, an actor or actress who is worth his salt is as constantly on the lookout for fresh character studies as a painter. Some are comic. The lines of the face irresistibly suggest laughter.

Perhaps such people are more to be pitied than the others whose faces tell a moving tale of sorrow and suffering. But all are of use. They suggest make-ups, expression, character. It's the only way to be perfectly natural, — to imitate nature, and have a definite type in mind in outlining every part.

"When I began, of course I wanted to look pretty. I was cast for the part of Tilly in the 'Hoop of Gold,' and I had the idea that I ought to have pretty dresses, red cheeks, fluffy hair, and all that. But common sense came to my rescue, and I saw I was on the point of making an artistic blunder, or, rather, an inartistic one. I saw that Tilly wasn't a society girl, but a puny thing, with prominent cheek-bones, rough hands, and a gawky figure, and I made her so. I've played many a part since, but the first in which I ever used a juvenile make-up was Audrey in a perform-

ance given by the Twelfth Night Club last year. I made her uncouth, but not homely, with an awkward body and a nasal voice.

"Now, here's a glimpse at the technique of make-up. For Audrey I used a blonde make-up, — first a careful coating of cold cream, the flesh-coloured grease paint, smoothed carefully for the buxom country girl's beautiful complexion. I was then ready for my No. 18 rouge, blended first with a rabbit's foot, and then with my fingers. Then I covered my face with rice powder. I used a blue shading over and under my eyes, blended so as to give them that round, innocent, wondering expression; then the Cupid's-bow mouth and the wig, and there you are. By shading and tinting, by lines above and below and at the sides, an actress can give herself any expression. But she must know how to do it; she must be an artist and an observer, and her brush must be skilful.

"In some characters I use no make-up, or rather a trick make-up, like that in 'The Sphinx.' In that I use a small, stiff wire propped between the nostrils, so as to make the nose wider and flatter. Sort of a Kalmúk face. The sensation is unpleasant, but not absolutely painful. For that matter, grease paint is not the pleasantest thing to have on the face, but you get used to it. Of course, I have to have wigs to match every part. That is something the actress can't make for herself, but she can design, invent, and devise, and the wigmaker can be made to follow her directions. The same is true of the costumer; and of course both wigmaker and costumer are oftenest called upon to imitate nature, to imitate painstakingly some queer, odd, or pathetic bit of human material picked up in the street by the actress herself. I'll give you an instance. As Miss Prim in 'The Importance of Being Earnest,' I got my idea of the make-up from

a poor, overworked farmer's wife, tired and worn by care and worry, whom I had known. I studied the lines in her face, and imitated them so that I won the sympathy of the audience.

"Some actresses think that a juvenile make-up is simple — just a few daubs of rouge, lines under the eyes, red on the lips, and so on. But it's not so easy. One girl should put white on the inside of the eyelid, because the pupils of her eyes are too large for the rest. Another should use the directly opposite method of loading the lashes with cosmetics, because the pupil is encircled with white and she needs the colour."

May Robson, whose name is Mary Robison and who was rechristened by a blundering compositor when she made her first appearance on the stage, was born in Australia. She was the daughter of English people of high standing, her father being an officer in the British navy. She was educated in Paris

and Belgium. In Paris she took the prize of the Red Cross, the highest form of graduation at the school Sumboiselle, and the proficiency in French that she acquired during her school days later stood her in good stead. When she was a mere girl she ran away from home and married, and her life for the next few years was an unhappy one. She finally found herself a penniless widow in New York with three little children to care for. She could draw and paint rather cleverly, and she started to fight poverty with these modest talents. She decorated china, painted on satin, and designed dinner menus, between times sandwiching in several classes in painting. Affairs seemed to prosper with her for a time, for the craze of china painting was at its height, and orders from Tiffany's and other firms were plenty. Then the fad passed over, and the money did not come in so rapidly. Sickness entered the little home, and two of the children died,

one from scarlet fever, the other from diphtheria. These were indeed gloomy times with the plucky woman.

"There wasn't a soul belonging to me," said Miss Robson, "who ever had been able to recite even 'Mary had a little lamb,' and I had no more intention of going on the stage than you have this minute, when one day I was passing Simmons & Brown's theatrical agency, and the idea seized me to go up and apply for a situation in some company. I went up, and while I was waiting my turn to see Mr. Simmons, I overheard Mr. Hanlon, one of the Hanlon Brothers, endeavouring in vain to get a lot of American girls, whom he was trying to engage, to understand him. On the impulse of the moment I offered my services as a French interpreter. After we got through Hanlon turned to me and asked me if I was open for an engagement. I said I was, and then and there he engaged me to play the French widow in 'Le Voyage

en Suisse.' That was Saturday. The next day he took me to the Grand Central station to meet his brother, who was to pass through the city, to have the bargain clinched. Said his brother, 'And how long have you been on the stage?' 'Never was,' said I, and the brother who had engaged me without asking the pivotal question disappeared down the platform as if shot from a gun. Mr. Hanlon could not risk putting an important rôle in the hands of an ignoramus on matters theatric, and the next day I turned up again at the agency and related the circumstances of my sudden fall from high hopes.

"The upshot of it all was that a friend told me that, though I had talent, he thought, yet I'd never get an engagement if I said I had had no experience. What I must do was to pretend I had. Before long I was engaged to play Diamond in 'The Hoop of Gold,' a melodramatic creation of the cast-off-daughter-of-an-obdurate-father style. This was at

the Madison Square Theatre. The morning of the first rehearsal came. I had been told to watch the others, and do just as they did. My turn came. 'Take the stage,' said the stage manager, old Mr. Morse. If he had told me to take the sky, I'd have been as wise. I clutched the table behind me and piped up my lines in a thin little voice, and was horribly conscious that the others were guying me for my greenness. The stage manager walked over to me and said, 'How long have you been on the stage?' I never had told a deliberate lie, and it choked me. I hemmed and hawed and said, 'Let me see, let me see.' 'Let me see,' said Mr. Morse, looking straight into my eyes, 'I should say about fifteen minutes.' 'Yes,' I said, glad it was out, and expecting my walking-ticket. But he helped me after the rehearsal, and the next day I wasn't so very dreadful.

"There was a small character part, the

slavey Tilly, in that same play that I asked to be allowed to do, having even then a fondness for dialect and odd specimens of humanity. On the opening night I made a hit, but it was as the slavey, not as Diamond, and thereafter I was billed to play that part, while 'Di' was put on the bills as played by some faked name. And that's how I went on the stage, without malice prepense, sure enough."

After "The Hoop of Gold" Miss Robson was engaged by Daniel Frohman for the Lyceum Theatre. Later she came under Charles Frohman's management, and has for many seasons been identified with the Empire Theatre Company. In her way Miss Robson is something of an inventor, and her third leg in "The Poet and the Puppets," and her amazing wig in "The Councillor's Wife," are readily recalled as examples of her ingenuity. The leg was first used, some six months before "The

Poet and the Puppets" was produced, in "The Shining Light," but it was perfected and made a feature in the later show.

"I invented the leg," Miss Robson explained, "because I couldn't dance, and because I had to dance in my part as a café chantant woman in 'A Shining Light.' I had either to dance or to admit that I wasn't up to the business. Of course I couldn't do the latter, so I had to devise some way to do the dance. One day I was walking down Broadway when I happened to see in a window one of those artificial legs on which they display stockings. An idea struck me, and I hurried home to try it. I stuffed a stocking, put a shoe on it, and then stuck my husband's cane into it. I put an extra skirt around this leg and tried the effect before the looking glass. It was funny, very funny. I then went to a maker of artificial limbs and told him what I wanted. Of course I altered the mechanism some afterward, as I found

by experience where changes had to be made. The leg was attached by a socket to a loose belt which I could easily shift, so that in a moment I could have the extra member hanging in front, at either side, or behind. The mechanism was so arranged that all I had to do was to start the leg in a certain direction, and up it went the rest of the way itself. Now my idea about this whole business was that the three legs should not be shown. When I danced I stooped in such a way as to conceal my real right leg under my skirts, and then the artificial limb took its place. I only showed all three limbs when I was leaving the stage and wanted to give the joke away."

The wig in "The Councillor's Wife" was also something of a dancing wonder. The audience on the first night thought, when the bangs made a dive for the old lady's nose, that it was all a mistake. The old lady's discomfiture, they thought, was that

of the actress in not being able to control her wig, and the house rang with laughter as she straightened her bangs and her cork-screw curls. When the old lady became extremely angry and the bangs shot far back on the head, revealing six inches of bald pate, the audience howled with glee, as they watched the actress gesticulating and repeating her lines with great fervour, apparently unaware that her hair was coming off. At another time the bangs went over the right eye, and then over the left, and the audience still thought it was all a mistake.

"There was really nothing remarkable about that wig," was Miss Robson's comment, when asked to explain how it was done. "The hair was controlled by wires which ran around the head. They met at the top of the knot of my own hair, which was coiled at the nape of the neck. At that place one wire was attached, which passed down my back and under my arm, coming

out of a buttonhole in front. It was by this wire and a few artful shakes of the head that the bangs were thrown about the head. They could not fall off, as the wires would allow them to go only a certain distance each way."

Miss Robson, in private life, is Mrs. Augustus H. Brown, the wife of a New York physician, whom she married after she became an actress, and her home in that city is a model of comfort and elegance. She has been before the public about fifteen years now. As representative of her work may be mentioned, in addition to those characters already noticed, her appearances as Miss Ashford in "The Private Secretary," Artemise in "A Night's Session," Veneranda in "Foregone Conclusions;" her acting in "Gloriana," "Lady Bountiful," and "Liberty Hall;" and her personation of the landlady in the production of "Squirrel Inn," by the Theatre of Arts and Letters, and her Madame Benoit in "Bohemia."

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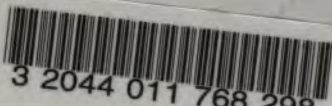

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